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Glen A. Pierce

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evangelical
VISITOR

February 1984





by Ronald J. Sider

Dedicated to David and Fanni Lichti on their 50th wedding anniversary

*T*oday is a very special day of celebration and happiness for us in the Lichti family. We rejoice and praise God for the gift of 50 years of married life. You know, 50th wedding anniversaries are increasingly rare in our sad, confused society. That any couple should reach that joyful landmark is a wonderful gift of God's grace and goodness. Truly this 50th anniversary is a day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Christian marriage is the best gift that God has given me after himself. In fact, all through the Bible it is striking, and no mistake, I think, that God uses language borrowed from married life to talk about the intimate personal relationship that he has with you and me as his people. Think of the Old Testament. God says he is married to Israel. Israel is his virgin, his bride, his wife. Jesus performed his first recorded miracle at the marriage in Cana. Paul says that the church is the bride of Christ. And then Revelation 19:9 gives us a picture of the final hope for which we yearn—the marriage supper of the Lamb. According to the Bible, the best clue about what it means to have a deep personal relationship with God comes from looking at the ecstatic joy and intimate love between happily married couples. That

is how special marriage is. That is how special this 50th wedding anniversary celebration is.

When we think of the joy of marriage, a thousand different pictures flash through our minds. We think of that first realization that the friendship between a young man and woman is more than just an ordinary friendship. We think of the special glowing beauty of the young couple's marriage day. (Some of that is still captured in your own old pictures. You wonder how you ever looked that beautiful and happy!) We think of the honeymoon. We think of the joy of seeing the love of two people blossom into children, then grandchildren. We think of the way the eyes still light up as the spouse enters the room after many years of marriage. We think of the quiet security of knowing that the other person is always there, in joy and happiness, in sorrow and grief. We think of Christmas celebrations for the first time with that one little child and then with several and then with the incredible mob that comes together for special family gatherings.

Thus far I have been talking and thinking of the joy of marriage, but we all know that it is only one part. Last night as I was working on this sermon, two contrasting images rushed vividly

through my mind. The one image was of the fantastic, gorgeous beauty of this earth that God has given us. I sat on the lawn and looked out over the gorgeous farmlands and lovely crops. It was a beautiful quiet evening; the sun was setting; a soft gentle breeze whispered through the pines. It is an incredibly beautiful world. The second image was painfully different. Think of the way hurricanes and tornadoes whip through forests and fields, ripping things apart, tearing things up, creating chaos and agony.

In the best of our marriages, we experience both the beauty and the storm, occasionally even seasons of storms when one tornado after another seems to tear through our lives. If the storms are not too frequent, if by God's grace we work at it, we can clean up our fields and our forests—and our marriages. The storms can be the occasion for real growth, for deepening love, for the maturing of our relationship. But increasingly today, devastating hurricanes seem to roar through our marriages, ripping them apart. One of two marriages now end in divorce. Even in the church, divorce is an ever more frequent reality.

Lifelong marriage is tough today, perhaps harder than ever before. The larger culture no longer supports mar-

riage the way it used to. We no longer live in stable communities where lasting marriage is the obvious, expected thing. Movies and television say marriage won't last. They tell us that extramarital affairs are the norm, that, of course, we divorce and remarry. Pop psychology tells us that we should think only of ourselves, that we ought to be meeting our own needs, that we have a right to self-fulfillment. If our spouse is not meeting our needs then, of course, we need to find somebody else who will. If we don't do that, we are not true to ourselves. We owe it to ourselves to be fulfilled. We are no longer isolated from the larger culture. The winds that blow through the total society affect all of us. Our confused society is falling apart at the point of the family. Lifelong marriage today is tough.

We need to stand and weep with those who have failed. God have mercy on us if those of us who still are married give in to the temptation to be proud, to be self-righteous, to be judgmental. If we are honest, we know very well that we all face the same temptation, that we have all walked close to the precipice. In this sad, crazy society, so devastated by the rampaging hurricanes roaring through our marriages, a 50th wedding celebration cannot only be a time for joy and celebration. It must also be a time for sober reflection, for a deepening of our commitment to the biblical understanding of marriage; a time to remind ourselves and our children what Christian marriage is; a time to remind ourselves and our children of the biblical way to preserve and deepen the joy of marriage.

So today I want to share three "C's" of Christian marriage: Covenant, Cross, and Church. We can keep lifelong marriage covenants today only if we understand and grasp firmly these three "C's."

The Covenant

What is the biblical understanding of Christian covenant? Genesis 2 and Matthew 19 help us understand. Genesis 2 is a marvelous story. Adam was not satisfied with the plants and animals and the things he could make. So God brought him Eve, bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh. Adam said, "Wow! That's what I've been looking for." It was very good. The Bible says that the man and the woman became one flesh. They became one, permanently.

In Matthew 19 we see clearly that God was telling us in Genesis that marriage is a lifelong commitment. Jesus deals with the question of divorce by

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quoting Genesis 2:24. Then, in verse 6, Jesus says "What God has joined together, let no man put asunder." Let no person end this divinely established covenant of unity for life. Clearly Jesus is saying marriage is a lifelong commitment. It is not just for good times; it is for bad times too. It is for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, for sickness and health, till death do us part.

The best protection against giving up when there is pain (and there will always be pain in our marriages at some time or other) is to be committed without reservation for the rest of one's life—"till death do us part." If that is clear, then we will struggle, we will cry, we will pray, and God will bring us through.

What then is a Christian marriage covenant? First of all, it is made before God—"What God has established." It is also made for life—"let no man put asunder." And it is to be made, you can be sure, with another person who is a believer. We need to make our marriage covenant with another Christian. Only Christians can make that kind of lifelong promise with the assurance that God will bring them through.

You know, the world has a cheap substitute for Christian marriage covenant. It is called contract. Sometimes the contract is explicit. Today some people even talk about a contractual marriage. They agree on what each party will do. If one party breaks the agreement and fails to keep the bargain, then it is O.K. to dissolve the marriage because it was merely a contract. But often the contract is implicit. We don't say explicitly that it is a contract, but it is. We say, "Let's try it. Let's see if it works. Let's see if it feels good. Let's see if it meets my needs." In all that, of course, the hidden assumption of contract is that I have a right to self-fulfillment. If the other party does not

meet my needs, then the contract is broken.

Society's limited marriage contract—explicit or implicit—is not Christian covenant. It is the devil's cheap substitute, a fraud, a trick. Satan, of course, sells it to us with slick language and big promises. He says it brings freedom. He says it brings liberation. He says "Society changes; you change; how on earth can you make a lifelong covenant?" I want to shout to my children, to all of our children, to all of us: "Let's not be deceived by Satan's substitute." Let's choose an unconditional solemn covenant before God rather than a limited liability contract. In God's name, let's choose Christian partners who will walk with us in a Christian marriage covenant. That is the only foundation strong enough to bring us to the deep joy of 50th wedding anniversaries. Covenant, biblical covenant before God, is the first "C" of Christian marriage.

The Cross

The second "C" is the *cross*. We all know—anybody that has been married a few weeks knows—there is pain as well as joy in marriage. All of us are somehow proud, selfish, petty, silly sinners. We hurt each other and then, inadequate as we are, we try to cover it up or try to blame the other person. We refuse to say we are sorry. It happens in the best of marriages. You know, finally, there is only one difficult solution to all of that. It is the solution at the heart of the gospel. It is the cross. It is costly forgiveness.

Ephesians 5 says that we are supposed to love our spouses as Christ loved the church. How did Christ love the church? He died for it. He went to the cross. Why? Because you and I are sinners. That's why. Every marriage has that kind of pain. Mom and Dad Lichti can

tell you about that. They have experienced some of that deep, sharp pain. When we hurt each other and betray each other, there are three options.

First of all, we can live with our anger and resentment. We can let it build up and grow and even feed on it.

The second choice is what I call cheap forgiveness. We can pretend our hurt really doesn't matter much. "Aw shucks. It was nothing. I don't care. It's O.K. It didn't really hurt much." That's not really true. But you can play that game of pretense if you like.

The third choice is the only one that really works: costly forgiveness. That's the way of the cross. Pain, betrayal, selfishness, and sin in marriage do matter. They hurt. They tear us apart. Costly forgiveness responds to the hurt in marriage the same way that God responds to sin. He says it is serious—indeed, so serious that the death penalty has to be paid. And then God takes the death penalty upon himself at the cross. God himself goes to the cross because he loves us in spite of our sinful failures. That kind of costly forgiveness is the only way to stay happily married for 50 years.

When the hurt comes we need to face it because it's not nothing. Then we can say, "I accept the pain that your betrayal, that your sin, brings upon me and I forgive you." That is the only way to reconciliation. You can't pretend that you haven't been hurt. You can't wish it away. You can only embrace the pain and forgive. That allows the other person the opportunity to say "I'm sorry." That allows healing and reconciliation to occur. How often do we need to do that? Husbands are to love their wives and wives are to love their husbands as Christ loves the church. How often does Christ forgive you? Seventy times seven and seventy times seven. How many times has Christ forgiven you in the past 10 years? In the last 50 years? Well, that is the way that we need to go on forgiving our husband or our wife.

The second "C," the cross, costly forgiveness, is closely related to the first "C" of covenant. The cross means never giving up. As long as we live, Christ stands there offering us forgiveness, repentance. God never says "I've had enough of you. I've had enough of your stupidity, of your silliness, of your unfaithfulness, of your sin and your failures." He always stands there as long as we live, saying "I'll give you another chance." Taking the way of the cross in our marriages, loving our spouses as Christ



loved the church, means never giving up, even in a difficult, painful time. This is not, I hasten to add, a recipe for sheer agony, for masochism. It is the only way to healing and to joy.

The Church

You young people may be saying: "All this sounds kind of scary. The demands seem very high. Lifelong commitment is a hard calling." You're right; it is. But remember, we are not alone. The risen Christ is in us. We have the power of God to keep our promises and we also have the love and support of the church, our last "C." All of the other brothers and sisters in the body of Christ promise to help us. That is why we have weddings rather than just going off by ourselves. The wedding covenant is not just a solemn covenant between God and two persons. It is also a solemn covenant in front of the brothers and sisters. They all promise, by attending the wedding, to help us in that marriage covenant.

In Ephesians, Chapter 5:29-32, Paul quotes Genesis 2: "After all, no one ever hated his own body but he feeds and cares for it as Christ does the church—for we are members of his body. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church."

Paul is saying that becoming one flesh in marriage is symbolic in some way of Christ's union with the church. Notice he says it symbolizes the union between Christ and the church, not the union between Christ and the individual Christian. We are not alone as individual Christians. We are part of the body. We are all united in the church with Christ, our bridegroom. That makes us one. As Paul says in I Corinthians 12:26, if one suffers, we all suffer. If one rejoices, we all rejoice. That is why we come together in the body of Christ to celebrate a wedding or to celebrate a 50th anniversary.

But the other side is that we also stand together when there are tough times. That is what we promise every young couple who comes to be married in the church. We are responsible for each other's marriages. Everybody in a body of believers is responsible if somebody's marriage fails. Did we pray, or gossip? Did we cry, or silently sneer? Did we gently counsel holding on, or did we stay coldly silent?

There are many ways that this third "C," the church, is crucial today. We

need much more emphasis in teaching our young people about the beauty and joy and lifelong commitment of Christian marriage. We need more premarital counseling. I wish we would say in our churches that we would not marry people unless they have gone through several months of Christian marriage counseling. We need better postmarital counseling. We need to tell each other it is O.K. to get counseling if we are having struggles in our marriage.

You know, it is very easy to be too



proud to do that. I think God has given my wife Arbutus and me one of the best marriages I have seen. But there came a time a few years ago when we very badly needed counseling. You know, I was too proud to do that for quite a while. I knew that many marriages around us were in trouble and that they needed help. In fact I was encouraging some of them to go and get counseling. But me? Thank God, after a while, when I hurt enough, I was ready to do that. Six months of marriage counseling with a wonderful Mennonite counselor was a tremendously important healing experience for us.

Marriage Encounter is another way that the church can help marriages. In Marriage Encounter, couples come together for a weekend to learn new techniques for tasting each other's feelings and for understanding each other. After Arbutus and I had a Marriage Encounter weekend, we tried new kinds of ways to understand and feel each other's feelings. We prayed "in each other's shoes." Now that was an easier thing for Arbutus to do than for me. Somehow her feet fit into my shoes more easily than my feet fit into her shoes.

Satan is a clever liar. He says marriages used to last because people had no other option. They hated each other, or


they lived parallel lives and they just stayed together because of custom. Now that is partly true and it is partly a lie. But this third "C," the church, gives us a way of handling the truth in this matter. I am not saying we should live forever with a terrible marriage, merely enduring the agony. I am saying there are ways to work at the pain, the failures, the hurts in each of our marriages. The church can and must help us do that. You can share your pain with the pastor or with a Christian marriage counselor. You can go to a Marriage Encounter weekend. Forgiveness, healing, renewal are possible in your marriage. The body of Christ, the church, is the support that God gives for lifelong marriage covenant.

Christian marriage is a tremendous gift from the Creator to us. But it is not always a bed of roses. It involves pain as well as joy. Covenant, cross, and church are absolutely essential for Christian marriage today.

I'd like to invite everyone who is married to quietly, in the silence of your own hearts, renew your lifelong solemn covenant to your spouse. Let us first recognize the anger and hurt that's there, and then release it. Let us forgive each other for the pain that has come and let us resolve anew to take the way of the cross in any future hurt. Finally, as a body of believers, let us covenant together to help each other keep our solemn covenant of lifelong marriage. Let us pray and counsel, share and strengthen, so that all of us are protected from Satan's tornadoes that he hurls at our marriages.

If, as a church, we will resolve anew to strengthen Christian marriage in the body of Christ, then we can promise our children and grandchildren that they too can reach the joyous landmark of a 50th wedding anniversary. They too can be filled with the mature love that comes when one man and one woman walk together through the joy and pain of life, loving and crying together, forgiving and rejoicing, forgetting and exulting together. And we can all look forward, thank God, to that final marriage celebration when we will gather together to sing and rejoice at the final marriage supper of the Lamb. Amen. ■

This article is adapted from a sermon presented by Ron Sider in honor of the 50th anniversary of his father- and mother-in-law, David and Fannie Lichti, New Hamburg, Ontario. Ron and Arbutus Sider and family live in Philadelphia, Pa.



The Fabric of Marriage

by David and Dorcas Climenhaga

It was Christmas Day and they were housebound—alone. Because of the bitter cold and blowing snow, all church services were cancelled. Their daughter and her husband could not get there. It was their first Christmas alone since 1944. But they were happy in each other's company, and in the warmth of their living room they began to reflect on their marriage. It began when they noticed the lacy patterns Jack Frost had painted on their windowpanes.

Impulsively Dorcas exclaimed: Don't the lacy ice patterns remind you of a valentine? We've been married 41 years, but I still feel excitement over receiving a sentimental valentine from you. Do you think it is important to keep romance alive in our marriage, or any marriage?

David: Yes, I do. Romance and love are the warp and woof of a marriage. They are part and parcel of the same fabric and they bind each other together. Everyone would say that love is an important part of marriage and I would put romance with it. Romance is a fragile thing. Busy schedules can crowd it out. We must purposefully continue doing the little kindnesses and unexpected things which we did before marriage.

Dorcas: Such as?

David: Well, when we were engaged, you came to California where we planned to be married in several months. But we were still 100 miles apart. I knew you would be lonely, so I wrote to you every day. Remember? Now, as then, I try to sense when you need some extra attention or to do some extra kindness when you least expect it.

Dorcas: In our dating days, I remember how special I felt when you were courteous and kind to me. I still feel special when you remember to send a birthday card, or you slip a bottle of perfume into my hand when you return home from a journey, or when you simply say, "I love you."

David: It works both ways, you know. Right after we were married, I became a professional blood donor to earn extra money. Each dinner following a donation you would have liver! But after giving blood one day, I almost fainted from weakness. You said, "That's enough of that; no more blood donations!" I knew you cared. As the years have gone by, there have been many times when you have put an extra special touch on things, just for me. You still do.

Dorcas: I know one thing, it has never been hard for you to say, "I love you"; it's harder for me to express my love in words. But you have taught me a lot. I try in other ways—making your favorite pie, writing you a note, keeping books and magazines at your favorite chair, and going for a walk with you when I don't really feel like it.

David: Love and romance keep excitement in a marriage, but there is more. As they are the warp and woof of a marriage, faithfulness is the foundation.

Dorcas: Explain that a bit more.

David: Well, I must confess I like the traditional marriage vows. When I promised to take you to be my wedded wife, to have and to hold from this time forth, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in health and in sickness, to love and to cherish till death do us part, I meant that. Too many people make that, "as long as love shall last," not "as long as life shall last." Faithfulness and commitment are part and parcel of the same thing. You know I will never permit a chance glance to be more than that. I also know I can trust you in any situation.

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Dorcas: Yes, and when you are away from home, you telephone and let me know where you are at night, especially if you are on the road and out of your usual schedule.

David: Exactly! And I do it purposely. You know, I am becoming more conscious the older I get (I am getting older even if you won't let me say I am getting old), that we must work consciously at relating to each other. Not that I have to work at being faithful. That is part of the whole; my faithfulness to God and to you are cut from the same piece. But there's another aspect to marriage I'd like to mention. Understanding of and sensitivity to our mate is so very important.

Dorcas: That's a must as far as I'm concerned.

David: It means purposely trying to put your needs, Dorcas, above mine, and trying to put the best interpretation on what you say and do. Purposefully! And intentionally! I would like to emphasize *intentionally*.

(Dorcas: Time out. Right now we're putting David's needs above mine. He wants to interrupt this conversation to hear Robert Schuller on T.V. I don't, but we're listening. Intentionally!)

The conversation resumes.

Dorcas: What you said about putting the other person's needs above your own goes counter to the emphasis of today's society on "my needs."

David: Yes, it does. And in the Christian home there is constant tension between living in today's society and maintaining our Christian principles. We should not live by the world's standards of love, but by Christ's teachings on love.

Dorcas: I remember when I needed your understanding. When our daughter Dorothy died, I was emotionally distraught for a time. Even after all these years, I clearly remember how you tried to understand me, how patient and sensitive you were to my needs. I must have been very difficult, but I know you were trying to feel with me. I guess that's why I feel so sad when I hear of marriages being strained after they have been through the illness or death of a child, or another kind of trauma. When I eventually came through to health, by the help

of a doctor friend and many prayers, I had only appreciation for you and your patience. Later, I was able to be of help to you when you were ordered to bed for a number of weeks with a stomach ulcer.

David: Yes, we've had some strain and tension. Every marriage has its testing times, whether it be physical, financial, or otherwise. And there are other strains on a marriage that must be reckoned with.

Dorcas: You mean like the differences in our personalities and makeup?

David: Yes. That's something you and I have had to wrestle with through the years. Sometimes it seems our motors run at different speeds; as though you're in overdrive and I'm plowing along in first gear. I think that likely that's been the hardest thing for me in our relationship and living together.

Dorcas: I know our different personalities have tested our patience. I think this is true in every marriage, and it is something which must be recognized, acknowledged openly and non-judgmentally, and accepted. With a good sense of humor, this particular aspect can add a lot of fun to a marriage. It has to ours. Of course it can lead to misunderstandings, too. That's where forgiveness comes in. I have been so

grateful that you helped us to live by the rule of "let not the sun go down upon your wrath." At the close of each day we tried to clear away anything which might have hurt the other, or which might have caused a strain between us. Do you agree?

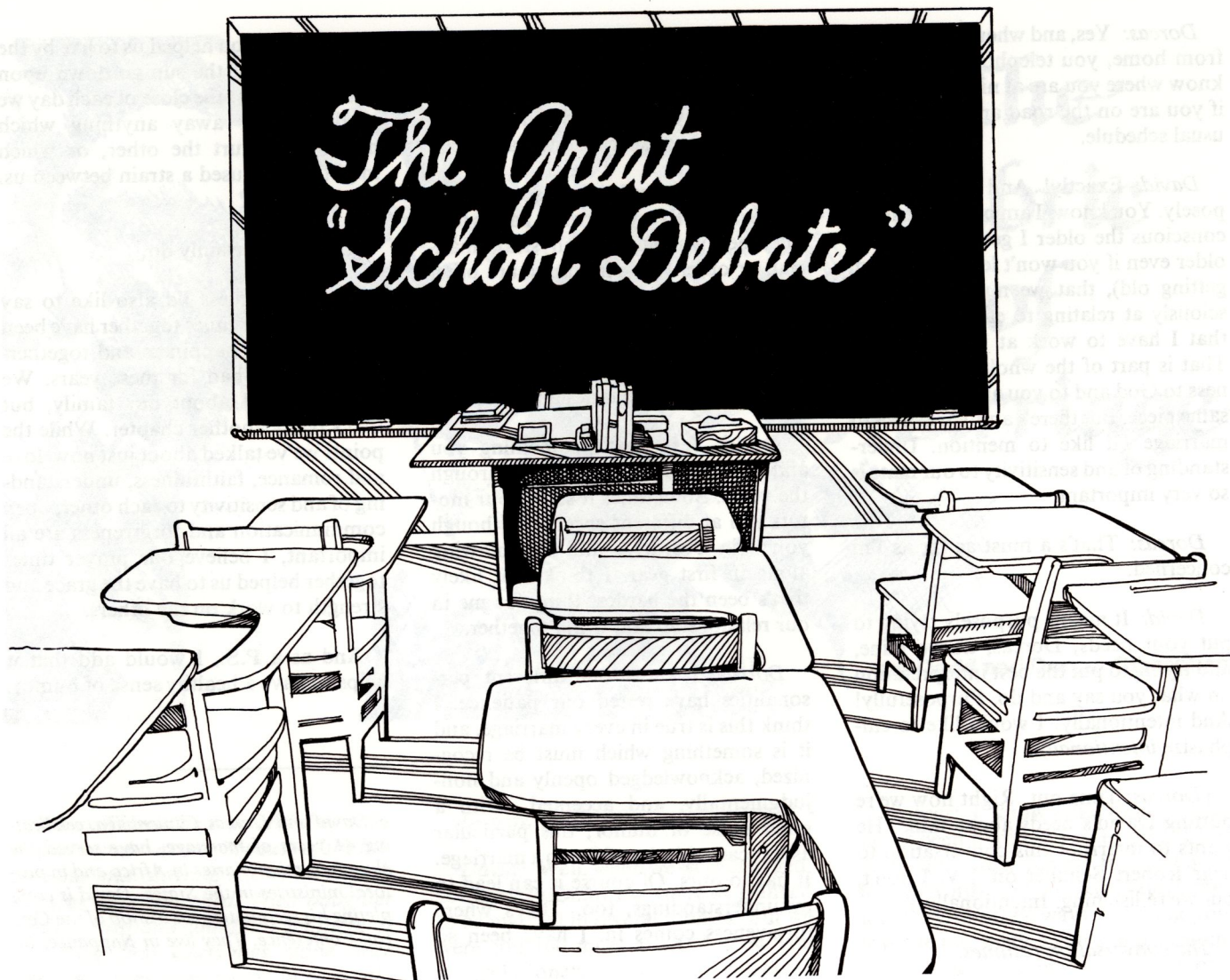
David: I certainly do.

Dorcas: I guess I'd also like to say that our prayer times together have been the key to the happiness and togetherness we have had for these years. We haven't talked about our family, but that's really another chapter. While the points we've talked about just now: love and romance, faithfulness, understanding of and sensitivity to each other, open communication and forgiveness are all important, I believe our prayer times together helped us to have the grace and strength to work on the others.

And as a P.S., I would add that it helps to have a healthy sense of humor.

David and Dorcas Climenhaga, celebrating 41 years of marriage, have served the church as missionaries in Africa and in pastoral ministries in the States. David is completing his second term as bishop of the Central Conference. They live in Nappanee, In.





Why I Believe in Public Education

by John A. Sider

Twenty-one years ago this September, I began a career as a public school teacher in a suburban school district in Central Pennsylvania. Although the first two or three years were nerve-wracking and difficult, I believed in the career I had chosen then, and the last 21 years have validated that choice.

Although I did not feel that full-time Christian service was God's choice for my life, as a Christian I was committed to some type of service occupation where my skills would be used for the benefit of others. I believed then—and still believe now—that teaching in the public schools would provide the kind of service outlet I was seeking.

Throughout the years I have welcomed the opportunity to model my Christian values and lifestyle before my professional colleagues and before thousands of high school students. While I

have encountered a tendency to reject direct, confrontational witness, it has been obvious that my lifestyle and values have affected those whom I've met, both in the faculty room and in the classroom.

The rewards of teaching are both immediate and long term. Very few satisfactions will match seeing a student grasp a new concept for the first time, or of witnessing the success of a play cast that has been rehearsing with me for two months. And then there are the delayed rewards. A few months ago a student told me, "My older sister had you about ten years ago. She told me you were the best teacher she ever had." I have found that in order to make an impact on high school students today, one must give of himself unselfishly, both in the classroom and outside the classroom. Some of my most rewarding experiences as a teacher have had nothing to do with my

teaching assignments, but have occurred during free moments or in after-hours activities.

But I have many reasons for supporting public education beyond the personal rewards and satisfaction I have enjoyed. The public schools have been under tremendous pressure both from the church and from society at large, yet I still believe they provide the best option we have for educating our children; and I say that from the combined perspective of Christian teacher, Christian parent, and Christian education director in the church I attend. My own children both attend the public schools, and while their experience hasn't been perfect, I have never considered looking for an alternative.

As a Christian, I believe that I have an obligation to support the public schools. Jesus compared his followers to salt and

light in describing their function in the world. Salt has a preserving and seasoning effect on what it contacts, and light conquers the darkness. If we reject the public schools because of their deficiencies, how can we be salt and light in that context? I believe that in supporting our schools we can influence them; by sending Christian children to them and by giving our support as Christian parents and teachers, we can have a redemptive influence. To withdraw from the public schools because they threaten our values is to consign them to the darkness without benefit of our Christian witness.

Furthermore, as a parent I believe it is my responsibility to prepare my children to live in the real world. To do that they must learn to be strong. I do not want them to grow up like sheltered hothouse plants that later cannot withstand the shock of real weather. The public schools provide them with a microcosm of the larger society they will have to live in, and I believe it is my parental obligation to help them learn to apply their Christian values to real life even at the tender age when they enter kindergarten. Only in this way can I hope to help them grow up strong and committed as Christians.

A third reason why I support public education has to do with my understanding of Christian stewardship. In almost all parts of this nation, public schools are funded by taxes—involuntary contributions which all of us make through local, state, and federal revenue sources. In other words, like it or not, we're already paying for our children's education, and at least in my case, I cannot justify paying twice. The support of private Christian schools at the elementary and secondary level must burden a family's—or a church's—financial resources and consequently limit the resources available for evangelism and community outreach. And not only do Christian schools tax a church's financial resources, but they tax "people" resources as well.

I do not want this article to turn into an attack on church-sponsored schools; that is not my purpose. However, I mentioned earlier that I still regard the public schools as our best option for educating our children. In my limited contact with parochial schools I have observed that while they insulate children from the world, they do not necessarily isolate them from the evil that is in the world. Indeed, it seems to me that they foster a form of juvenile monasticism that at its worst can collect many of the trappings

of sectarian practice, and even at its best creates an unreal environment for learning to live in the world.

Let me move on to provide a personal assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the public schools. First of all, schools obviously will reflect the communities in which they're found. They will vary depending on whether the community is liberal or conservative and whether it is urban, suburban, or rural. Both the school that I teach in and the one to which I send my children would be characterized as suburban and relatively conservative, so the assessment I offer of our schools may not reflect schools in other parts of the nation. Two observations I would offer, however: first, our schools can never be any better or worse than the communities they represent; and second, I find that generally students are no worse now than they were 20 years ago—different, but no worse.

I remember an elderly principal who was fond of saying, "The parents . . . send us the best they have." The truth of that statement indicts us all—if our schools are bad, we are all partly to blame.

Certainly the public schools offer many advantages that are the product of their broad support base. First, there is

the overall quality of education, including the breadth of curricular offerings both in required and elective courses and the level of teacher training. While not all teachers are conscientious, or even competent, the vast majority of them are highly skilled and intensely committed to their profession. Secondly, the public schools usually provide equipment, facilities, and resources that reflect the latest methods and techniques in learning. Furthermore, a wide variety of extra-curricular activities—both athletic and cultural—enhances the program of the public schools. The opportunity to participate in sports, or drama, or music activities can be an enriching experience for a child.

However, there are dangers that Christian parents need to guard against in sending their children to public schools. Some of these dangers involve the curriculum and some involve secular values in general.

The teaching of evolution has long been at the top of the list of curricular concerns voiced by Christians. However, I do not believe evolution to be the most serious threat to Christian values, for it is a clear-cut issue that is easily identified and easily dealt with. I am far more concerned with the content of some of the courses in literature and



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social studies, where our children may be subjected to books dealing with the occult or courses on marriage, sex, and family that project very secular values. And some of the most damaging of all are futurism courses that project a science fiction lifestyle devoid of humanity or any traditional values. These are the curricular areas that frighten me the most as a Christian parent.

Even more pervasive, however, are the secular values with their lack of concern for personal integrity and their acceptance of sexual looseness and chemical dependency. Certainly "sex, drugs, and booze" are present in the public schools and provide a constant temptation.

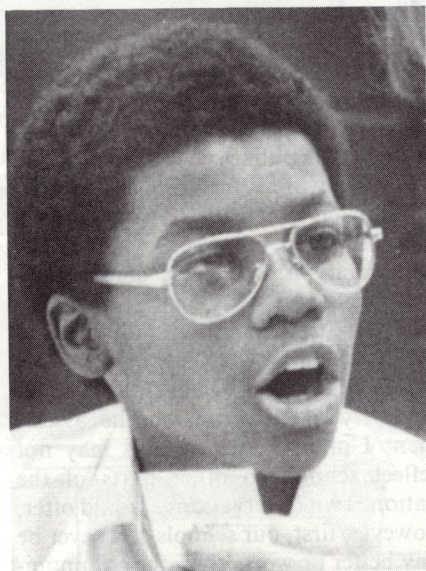
To summarize my assessment of the public schools then, let me freely acknowledge that there are dangers and deficiencies which can entice our children and ruin them. However, I firmly believe that the good far outweighs the bad, and careful attention to church and family responsibilities can provide our children with a solid foundation that will allow them to participate in the public schools, reap vast benefits from their participation, and "let their lights shine" in the process.

Let me suggest several ways in which the church—that is, the local congregation—can help to provide a strong base of support for our children in the public schools. I do not believe the church should try to duplicate either the instruction or the activities sponsored by the schools, but there are several things a church can and should provide.

1. *A strong Christian education ministry:* This should include a vital Sunday school that provides clear teaching of the Scriptures in the context of today's society, an energetic club ministry which gives our children something they can be proud to invite their non-Christian friends to, and a strong commitment to evangelism which regularly confronts our children with Christ's claims on their lives.

2. *Social activities:* This is especially important for teenagers who often cannot feel comfortable participating in social activities at school. An active youth group can fill a vital role in a Christian teenager's life.

3. *Clear teaching on critical issues:* Both through the Sunday school and the pulpit, clear positions on issues such as drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sexuality, abortion, and non-resistance need to be provided. The church has a responsibility to speak out clearly and repeatedly



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on the pressures that confront our children.

4. *Support for the family:* Recognizing that in the final analysis Christian education and commitment are the responsibility of the family, the church needs to do everything possible to foster family solidarity, both through instruction and activities.

5. *Visibility in the schools:* The schools need to know that the church exists, and the church should not hesitate to communicate official positions and opinions to the schools. Furthermore, participation by pastors and other church leaders in the activities of the school can also enhance this visibility. For example, our pastor accepted the invitation to preach the Baccalaureate sermon in the local high school.

Christian parents also have a role to play in the local schools, and the goals are much the same as those of the church—influence and visibility. Parents need to participate in the schools by volunteering in the classroom, chaperoning field trips, attending school programs, learning to know teachers and administrators, and even attending Board of Education meetings. At the very least, a child's teachers should know who the parents are and what they stand for.

Furthermore, parents need to communicate with the schools. They need to let school officials know their opinions on important issues, and should not hesitate to communicate if they disagree with school policies or actions. All school professionals, from board members on down, feel keenly the weight of "parent power" and respond quickly to it.

Being elected to the Board of Education is perhaps the ultimate way for a Christian parent to influence the schools. Many citizens run for a school board office for selfish reasons—the Christian who can bring a quality of selfless service, as well as high ideals, to the job is performing a valuable role, for it is the board that controls policy and practice in the schools.

In the final analysis, however, it's the home that plays the ultimate role in supporting children in the public schools. Most importantly, parents must communicate with their children. Children must know where the family stands on the issues; they must feel sympathetic understanding of the pressures they face.

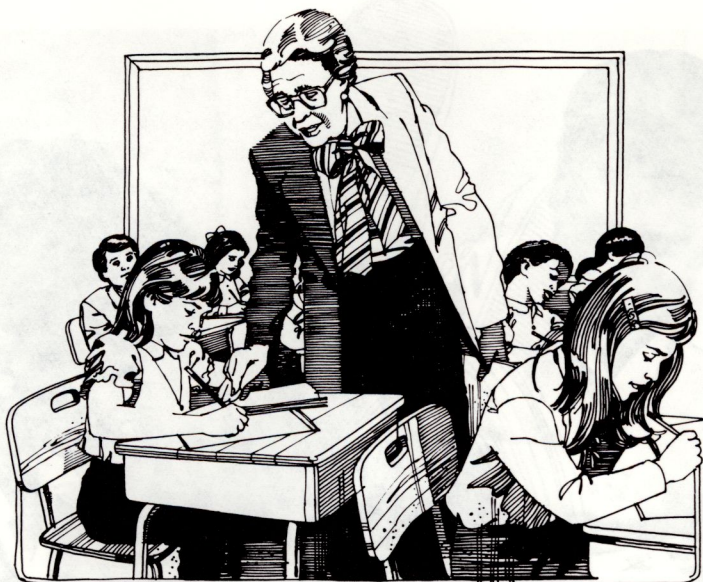
Parents need to know what their children are studying in school. Helping them with homework, monitoring their progress, and helping older children to choose their courses can be useful ways to keep up with what's happening.

Parents also need to know who their children's friends are. Making the home a relaxed place where children know their friends will be welcome can also help to keep the lines of communication open.

Finally, everyone needs to "be a family." That means lots of interaction—both joys and frustrations, spending time together, doing things together, and praying together.

No matter what route our children take to responsible Christian adulthood, there are many dangers along the way. No child ever came with a written guarantee, but I believe that with a little special effort, our children can "not only endure but they can prevail" in the public schools. A principal whom I worked for had a motto on his wall that read "What's best for the child." I believe that attending the public schools is best for my children, but I also accept the burden of responsibility that it brings. ■

John A. Sider is Director of Christian Education for the Grantham congregation, where he and his wife, Carolyn, and their two children attend. He teaches English in the Derry Township School District in Hershey, PA.



The Christian School Experience

by Rhoda Carr

Few parents would deny that they want to provide the kind of environment that will help their children find meaning and purpose in life. Because my husband and I share this concern, we feel that the positive influence of a Christian school can indeed be instrumental in helping our children find that meaning and purpose in Christ. Our perspective is directly related to our experience with Kraybill Mennonite School, Mount Joy, Pa.

We were initially attracted to Kraybill School because of its reputation for sound theology, and academic and spiritual excellence. In addition, since we attend a small church, our son needs more Christian peers. We recognize some advantages within the public school system. Many times the public school facilities and equipment are superior to those of Christian schools. But we need to evaluate these factors in the light of their ultimate worth. We can also be thankful for the committed Christians in the public school system who are helping to balance the prevailing evil with good.

Despite the potential material advantages of public schools, it is rather obvious that our society is becoming more and more secularized. The philosophy of secular humanism permeates many schools. Much energy is required to teach our children how to assimilate divine truth in daily situations. Many public schools seem to deny the importance of moral absolutes. Situational

ethics seem to be the prevailing norm. Dishonesty, sex, drugs, alcohol, smoking, and occultism seem to be tolerated.

Critics eagerly find fault with the "sheltered" life found in many Christian schools. Critics contend that the children are not exposed to the real world. Consequently, when the children are confronted with the reality of evil, they are unprepared to cope. Although it is understandable why an individual could arrive at this conclusion, this view can hardly be accepted without further examination.

Nowhere in the Bible are we commanded to expose our children to evil. Furthermore, the children in the Christian school are every bit as human as the children in the public school, and they have the same problems. But they get more help in dealing with these human feelings and desires. Thus they are more capable of coping with the real world.

One of the redeeming factors in Kraybill School is that teachers, parents, and students are challenged to use biblical guidelines to modify and control their behavior so that they can in fact make a positive contribution to the world in which they live.

The next best method to a child learning under the tutelage of a loving Christian parent is a child learning under the tutelage of a loving Christian teacher. We appreciate the reinforcement that our child receives from the school. Honesty, integrity, moral values, Christian disciplines, and respect for author-

ity are taught and modeled. Personal disciplines such as fasting and daily personal devotions are encouraged.

The students are given guidance in conflict resolution when conflicts arise. For instance, our son became involved in a conflict with another student. A teacher carefully helped the involved students work out a mutually agreeable solution and also helped them examine their feelings in the situation.

Christian schools can provide other benefits rarely found in the public schools. We appreciate the liberty to deal with all areas of life, especially at such holiday times as Christmas and Easter, when there is freedom to celebrate the real meaning of these holidays. We also have the freedom not to celebrate a holiday that has an emphasis on the occult, such as Halloween.

From time to time, Kraybill School will sponsor an MCC volunteer from a foreign country to help in instruction at the school and share personal experiences to help students learn about other cultures. This year the MCC volunteer is Miss Keiko Sasaki from Japan. Our son comes home from school really excited about the elective Japanese Culture and Customs course Miss Sasaki teaches.

At Kraybill School, parents and teachers cooperate and work together in the learning process. Therefore, the children are usually well-disciplined, thereby facilitating and enhancing learning. Parents also volunteer as aides.



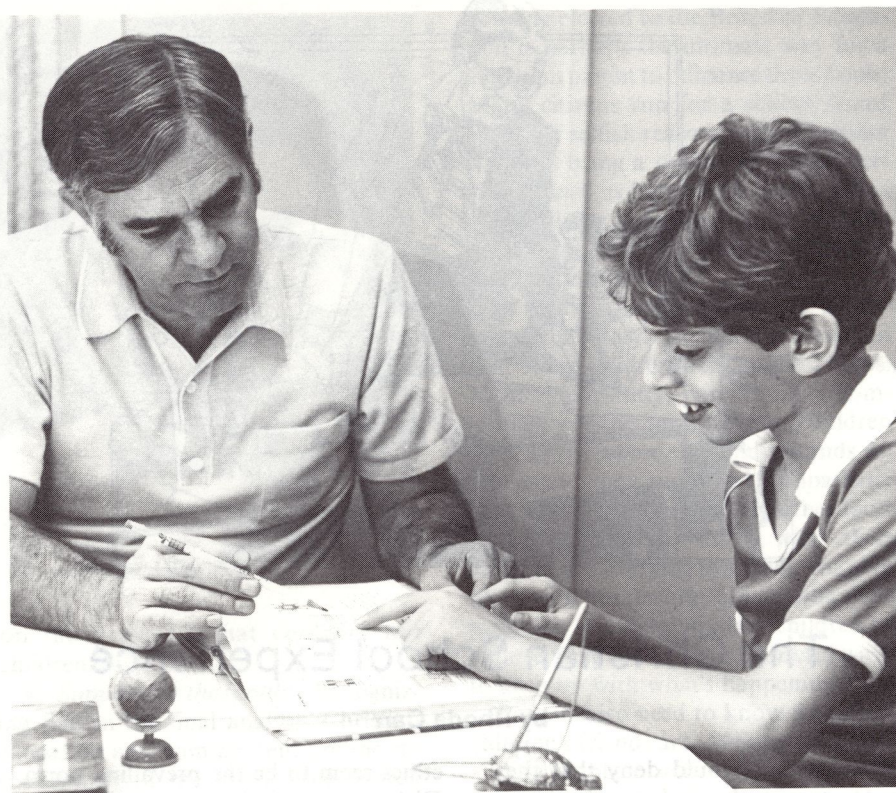
Parent and teacher conferences and meetings are attended with regularity. Other school activities, such as dramas, musicals, or other special activities, are almost always attended by the majority of parents. The involvement and cooperation of students, parents, and teachers enhance the spirit of community and commitment.

An additional advantage of Kraybill School is that of being involved with a school in which the policies are decided by a board of trustees composed of parents of the students. I find this aspect very interesting and meaningful. Even efforts to raise funds for the school can be a means of developing and deepening relationships.

Finally, Christian schools have the opportunity to immerse our children in God's Word. Deuteronomy 6:5-9 instructs us to completely integrate the Word into our lives. The combined efforts of the home, the Christian school, and the church in lifting up Jesus are invaluable in helping to weave the Word into our children's lives.

In the final analysis, we must realize that there is no formula or guarantee that our Christian schools will be successful in encouraging our children to follow Christ. The most important element in their education is that we develop them in prayer and that we spend time on our knees before the Lord asking what areas we need to change in order to be more excellent role models for our children.

Allen and Rhoda Carr and their three children live in Middletown, PA. They attend the Harrisburg congregation.



Alan Ciliburn

Homeschooling: One Family's Alternative

by Judy Stoltzfus

We have been homeschooling for over four years. To help you understand why, let me share some information pertaining to our lifestyle and introduce to you the members of our family.

Joe and I have four children. Jeffrey, at 15, enjoys learning facts of the universe, specifically of our solar system. Some of his interests are playing guitar, weaving, taking apart an engine for a special project or invention of his, and creating and building wooden farm toys. After rewiring several barns and houses, he is turning into quite an electrician. Jonathan is 13 and enjoys farming and working with machinery. Drama and music are two areas where he shines. He enjoys putting on skits, plays, and reading for the family. He has a knack for handling animals and enjoys spending time training his filly as well as his 4-H steer. One of his pastimes is horseback riding.

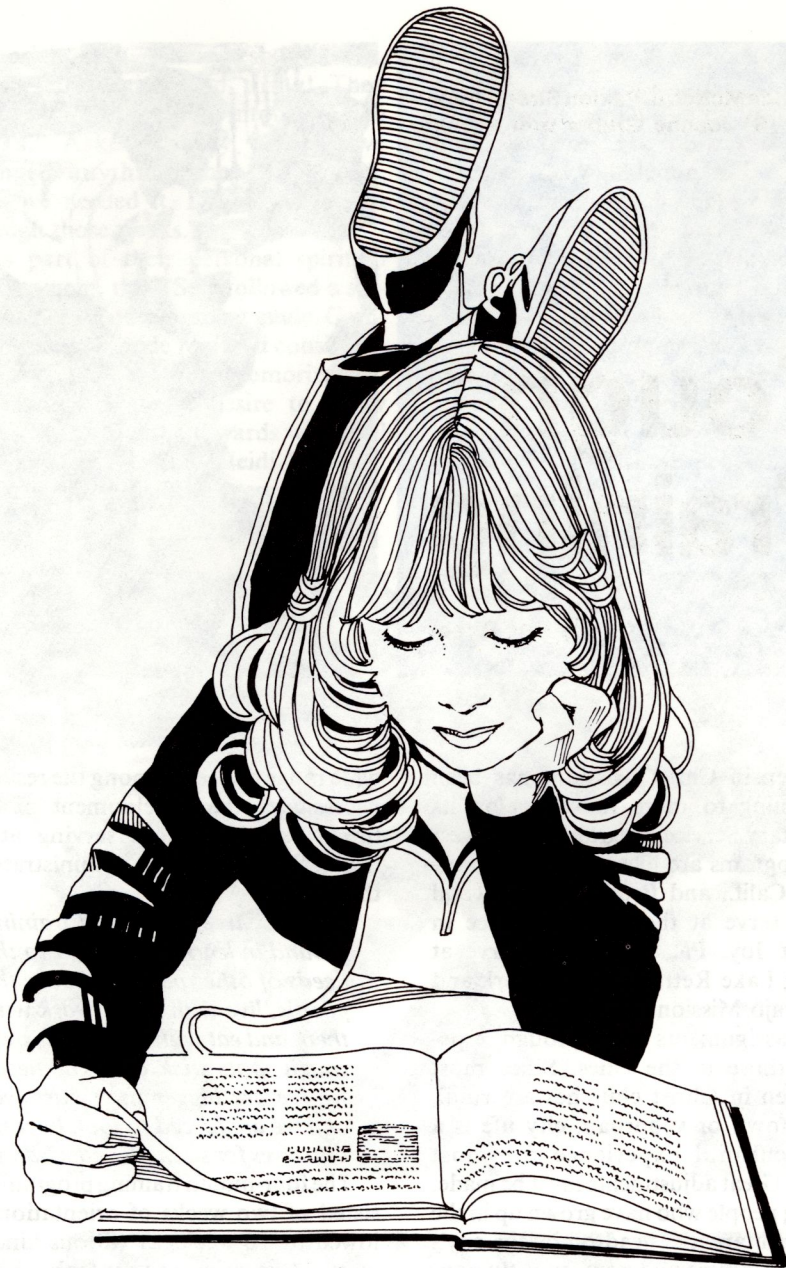
Jolita, at 10, is an avid reader, the library being her favorite place to visit. Some of her favorites are C. S. Lewis' *Narnia* series, and J. R. R. Tolkien's trilogy, *The Lord of the Rings*. She enjoys crafts and putting together a "Poem" magazine once a month for her

parents. Jamie, at 6, enjoys riding his bicycle, playing records and learning how things are made. His new exciting discovery is being able to play some chords on the guitar just like his older brother and "actually make music!"

We live on a 70-acre beef farm, raise our own meat, and milk 10 goats for our milk, butter, and cheese. We grow our own grains for our animals and ourselves, using a grinder for our flour. Joe has a small farm building construction business as our main source of income and, as a hobby, tends 17 hives of bees for our honey supply. In the summer we have a large garden, and in the winter we heat our house and water with wood.

The homeschooling of our children is a logical extension of our philosophy of taking personal responsibility for our own lives. Our past experience showed us that to "farm out" the education of our children, especially during the impressionable years up to age 8 or 10, exposed them to too much detrimental input. The "busy work" generated, the wasted time in transportation to and from school, and the competitive atmosphere which dominated the school system were all exerting, far too great a negative

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influence on our children. We feel that children are born with an innate desire to learn and explore the world about them, and that it's our responsibility as parents to encourage and provide an atmosphere filled with ideas and information that will satisfy their curiosity and whet their appetites to further explore the world around them. We further feel that the formal education of children starts far too early—whether at home or in a school—and may inhibit this desire and dampen the enthusiasm for learning. Albert Einstein said much the same thing:

It is, in fact, nothing short of a miracle that the modern methods of instruction have not yet entirely strangled the holy curiosity of

inquiry; for this delicate little plant, aside from stimulation, stands mainly in need of freedom; without this it goes to wrack and ruin without fail. It is a very grave mistake to think that the enjoyment of seeing and searching can be promoted by means of coercion and a sense of duty. To the contrary, I believe that it would be possible to rob even a healthy beast of prey of its voraciousness, if it were possible, with the aid of a whip, to force the beast to devour continuously, even when not hungry, especially if the food, handed out under such coercion, were to be selected accordingly. We feel that if we help our children, or

just allow them to learn what their minds are ready and hungry for at each step of the way, they will remember it, use it, build on it. If we try to make them learn what we think is more important, less will be absorbed and what's worse, their appetite for learning starts to wane.

Homeschooling is not for everyone, but at this time in our lives and with our present value system, homeschooling seems a logical method to relate to and form lasting relationships with our children. Along with homeschooling, we feel it's very important to encourage our children to participate in community events as well as activities such as 4-H, YFC clubs, and church-related programs and parties.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that homeschooling is not to be pursued unless you have a very strong inner leading that this is what your family needs and that your value system fits in to all that homeschooling demands. In his book, *Teach Your Own*, John Holt mentions what people need, to teach their own children.

First of all, they have to LIKE them, enjoy their company, their physical presence, their energy, foolishness, and passion. They have to enjoy all their talk and questions, and enjoy equally trying to answer those questions. They have to think of their children as friends, indeed very close friends, have to feel happier when they are near and miss them when they are away. They have to trust them as people, respect their fragile dignity, treat them with courtesy, take them seriously. They have to feel in their own hearts some of their children's wonder, curiosity, and excitement about the world. And they have to have enough confidence in themselves, skepticism about experts, and willingness to be different from most people, to take on themselves the responsibilities for their children's learning. ■

Joe and Judy Stoltzfus now live on a farm near Loysville, PA. In the 1970's Joe worked in the maintenance department at Messiah College, at which time they were part of the Grantham congregation.



(L) Rhonda McNeil in Paxton Street Home's garden; (R) Joanne Gruber with a young friend.

Tough Training

by Phil Byers



Preparation for God's service does not come easily. To be prepared to serve the Lord, you need to be willing to go through some tough training. That is just what several young people experienced during the summer of '83 at the Paxton Street Home.

Brethren in Christ Missions, in cooperation with the Paxton Street Home, introduced a new short-term VS program last summer. The four-month Voluntary Service training unit was conducted at the Paxton Street Home from June through September. It offered training and direct experience in personal spiritual development, service opportunities, witnessing, and cross-cultural living.

One of the young persons, Heidi Willis, reflected on the four months. "Since graduating from high school (June 1983), my faith has grown so much. . . . I know it's from my experiences here."

Of the six VSers that took part in the training, Heidi was probably the most enthusiastic about the experience, but the others voiced similar testimonies of spiritual growth, broadened horizons and newly acquired personal relations skills. JoAnn Graber noted, "It taught me not to think about myself so much, but to look to the needs of others."

The VS training unit was developed to help young adults prepare for short-term VS assignments and ultimately for a lifetime of service. In recent years,

Brethren in Christ Missions has been attempting to more fully develop its Voluntary Service program. The largest VS programs are located in San Francisco, Calif., and Bronx, N.Y. Several VSers serve at the missions office in Mount Joy, Pa., and a few serve at Spring Lake Retreat in New York and at Navajo Mission as needed.

VS assignments can be tough, especially those in the cities. Since most Brethren in Christ churches are rural, small town or suburban, city life is a cross-cultural experience for most VSers. Great adjustments must be made. Young people who have grown up in the Bible belt are met head-on by the city's diverse cultures and new—mostly non-Christian—lifestyles. They must learn to deal with cultural differences, poverty and affluence, and the prevalence and multifariousness of immorality. Mental as well as spiritual preparation is essential.

Our Voluntary Service training unit was developed with these needs in mind. The Paxton Street Home was chosen as the base of operations because of the environment it offered. As Tami Spurlin notes, "Paxton Street is a great place to serve if you're thinking about future service. Things are really tough here. It's a place where you can check out your gifts and talents to see how much you can handle."

The Paxton Street Home is a Christian home serving the disadvantaged, the mentally retarded, those without family, the homeless, the elderly, and those in need of Christian guidance. The

wide range of needs among the residents necessitates the development of relational skills by those serving at the home. Says Beth Frey, administrator of the home,

Paxton Street is a good training ground in learning to bend to the needs of other people. We see the people, live with them, work with them and eat with them. Our own rough spots stick out. The needs we see are bigger than ourselves and we are forced to look beyond ourselves for strength and wisdom.

The four-month training program consisted of two weeks of orientation followed by 16 weeks of various kinds of work. Most trainees rotated jobs. Assignments included work in the home (kitchen detail, housekeeping, gardening, maintenance, and working with the residents) as well as playground supervision at the Harrisburg Brethren in Christ church.

The two weeks of orientation were packed with Bible study, training, and job responsibilities. A typical day included devotions with the home staff, morning and afternoon training sessions, personal devotional time, and work with the residents. Lectures during the training sessions covered a variety of topics: devotional life, relationships, mental health, the disciplined life, the Christian in the city, minorities, and stress. Lecturers included Paxton Street staff, Brethren in Christ Missions administrators, Messiah College professors, a pastor, and others.

I asked two VSers their opinions of

Phil Byers is on the staff of Brethren in Christ Missions, Mount Joy, Pa.

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the orientation. Their response was, "Time consuming and tiring! They packed a lot of learning into those two weeks." Asked if they would have changed anything, they responded, "No, we needed it. I'm glad we went through those weeks."

As part of their personal spiritual development, the VSers followed a six-week spiritual development guide. Completion of this guide required considerable time in Bible study, memorization, self-discipline, and a desire to know God's Word. But the rewards were well worth the effort. Said Heidi Willis, "I can truly say I feel the presence of the

Lord more as a result of getting into the Word more."

The work responsibilities were learning experiences. The trainees seemed to feel that the interaction with the residents at the home brought about the most growth in their lives. Eyes were opened to the needs of the people in our world. The trainees learned how God could use them to help. Most of the residents needed someone to talk to, someone who would listen. They needed friendship. Many were angry, having carried bitterness for years. Trainees learned to help these people see the world from a different perspective.

"Getting a smile from a frustrated resident made your day," said Heidi. "Jim (fictitious name) was so angry; I called him sweetie and he smiled! I learned how to talk with residents even when they called me 'brace face.'" (Heidi wears braces.)

The summer youth program at the Harrisburg church provided the VS trainees another opportunity to serve. At the same time, the trainees provided the church with the personnel needed to offer this service to the community.

Twenty-five to 35 children were involved in the youth program. It was held every weekday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., minus an hour for lunch. The church parking lot became the playground where the kids could play kickball, four square, or jump rope. Nerf basketball was played at the front of the church with the hoop hung on the door.

Wednesday morning was craft time and that afternoon a movie or guest speaker would entertain the children. Twice a week the children heard Bible and other Christian stories, and learned and recited Bible verses for prizes.

Glenn Dalton, pastor of the Harrisburg church, helped in the planning of the VS training unit. According to Pastor Dalton, "The youth program served to improve community relations, providing grounds for evangelism. It also provided cross-cultural training for the VSers who coordinated the program."

This four-month Voluntary Service training experience was intense. The environment was one of needy people who demanded the VSer's help and attention. The work was tough. There were constant pressures that forced the quick learning of teamwork. One had to learn to get along with others, or not make it. The learning of community was essential. Finally, voluntary service training was a place for growth which demanded a desire to grow and a willingness to put forth the necessary effort.

(This kind of experience is excellent for Christians at all stages of spiritual maturity who are committed to seeing further growth in their Christian lives. However, due to the program's intensity, participants should not be dealing with a burden of personal struggles.) ■



(Top) Playground friends at the Harrisburg Church.

(Lower) Heidi Willis plays Nerf basketball with neighborhood boys.

Tentmaking:

a missions alternative

by James M. Stern, M.D. with Linda J. Stern

I recently participated in a new type of mission activity in central Africa. Let me describe it for you. The mission station: a three-story complex of brick, mortar, and steel known as the University Teaching Hospital, a well-equipped, modern institution. Its location: a capital city of 400,000, many of whom speak the official national language, English. Living conditions: a mixture of western and traditional. My co-workers: an assortment of nationalities—Indian, Russian, East and West German, British, Nepalese, and Zambian. The Zambian worked mostly in administration, for this particular mission station is in their homeland.

My duties at this mission: to serve as a surgical consultant, supervising operations performed by national physicians in training, instructing medical students in the conference room and on the floors as we work together with patients, and assisting in the organization of the surgical program. My working hours: mostly 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., leaving me a generous amount of time for study, writing, and developing personal relationships with physicians and nurses in training, fellow faculty members, and other nationals with whom I become acquainted. Or, to put it another way, I had time to do real "missionary" work: evangelism and discipleship training.

Contrast this with my experience at a traditional mission hospital, 1959-1969, situated in a rural, sparsely settled countryside. I had to be master of many

trades: administrator, personnel manager, plumber, carpenter, electrician, mechanic, supervisor of the maintenance and construction laborers, not to mention general practitioner, pediatrician, obstetrician, surgeon, etc. We were plagued with a stringent budget. My equipment was meager and often non-functional. There was not adequate personnel to staff the hospital; therefore, those that were there were overworked. My own hours usually began at sun up and lasted late into the night.

Although on the whole the missionary staff and national employees worked well together, there were times when the press of duties and the pinch of the budget caused tensions. The missionaries felt the pressure of trying to accomplish more than they could reasonably handle and balancing the budget in the process, while the nationals pushed for higher salaries and other amenities for themselves. Since their work at the hospital was often just a means of employment as far as they were concerned, they often did not share the missionaries' commitment and dedication to the work at hand, or to the cause of Christ. For these reasons, disputes—regardless of their cause—frequently took on racial overtones.

I used to think to myself, "This is a no-win situation. And to think I came over here to 'make disciples'" (Matt. 28:19).

Of course, not all missionary physicians experience these same problems. But after discussing the mission hospital situation with quite a few of my missionary physician colleagues and having

listened to their presentations, I have come to the conclusion that the majority of them do experience similar frustrations, though varied somewhat by their individual circumstances.

However, this is not the whole story. Despite their negative aspects, mission hospitals have made a significant contribution to the total mission endeavor. Since their inception, they have provided a high quality of medical care to people who would otherwise have been without it. Mission hospitals are usually highly respected among the nationals, because the quality of medicine they practice is superior and is dispensed with a compassion and love rarely found elsewhere. For these reasons, patients will often bypass closer and sometimes cheaper government institutions to seek out a mission hospital.

Further, mission hospitals have supplemented and enhanced the establishment of the national church in many areas by demonstrating in a very obvious way the holistic nature of Christianity. In the day in which they were established, they were the obvious route to go in the field of medical missions, for then rural medical care was an urgent need, and there were few teaching centers in existence.

Today, however, there is another option available in missions, particularly that of tentmaking. This term was popularized by Dr. J. Christy Wilson, himself a tentmaker missionary teacher in Afghanistan. In his book, *Today's Tentmakers*¹, "tentmaker" means simply "a self-supporting missionary." The term derives from the Apostle Paul's means

Dr. and Mrs. Stern are members of the Fairland Avenue congregation in Waynesboro, Pa.



The modern three-story University Teaching Hospital of Zambia in Lusaka.

of supporting his own missionary activities. (see Acts 18:1-5)

Tentmaking Missions is not New

However, although tentmaking missions has come more to the fore in recent years, it is not a new concept. The practice has been around for a long time. There were, for instance, the Persian Christians of the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. who, as they fled Zoroastrian persecution, went everywhere preaching the gospel.

*Supporting themselves by the labor of their own hands or filling appointments as secretaries, physicians, or stewards in the households of the nobles and princes of those lands to which they went, they were one and all missionaries of the cross.*²

Dr. John Stewart in his extensive study of this movement gives strong evidence to support his claim that this was "the most missionary church the world has ever seen."³

Added to the roster of tentmaker missionaries are the familiar names from our grade school textbooks of Marco Polo and Christopher Columbus. Unfortunately, those same texts fail to mention that one of the primary motivations behind explorations of these men was their desire to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And then there was William Carey, the father of modern missions. To support his missionary endeavors, Carey managed an indigo dye factory, wrote articles on the botany of India for the *Encyclopedia Britannica* and served as professor of Bengali at a British college

in Calcutta. When he was interviewed for the latter position, Carey expressed his fears that this job might not be compatible with his work as a missionary, but was won over as he realized the potential for spreading the gospel.

*It would immediately introduce the Bengali New Testament into the College, and any other books also which I might recommend, and eventually would spread them into all parts of the country . . . It would open a way to preach to the Hindus in Calcutta and its environs, and would put a number of respectable Hindus under my direction as 'Munchis.'*⁴

William Carey's experience in tentmaking was so successful that near the end of his missionary career he wrote:

*We have ever held it to be an essential principle in the conduct of missions, that whenever it is practicable, missionaries should support themselves in whole or in part through their own exertions.*⁵

The tentmaker missionaries I have mentioned are but a small sample of the hundreds both in the past and today who have found a fruitful ministry as cross-cultural evangelists, disciplinarians, and church planters while using their professions or skills to support themselves and, in some cases, to gain entry into a country closed to traditional missionaries.

Personal Experience in Tentmaking

After reading and hearing about this type of ministry and remembering the frustrations of my past missions experience, I decided to experiment with

tentmaking missions personally. Since my field is surgery, I looked for a teaching hospital where I could work in that discipline. Also, because my tenure would be brief on this occasion, I wanted a situation where I could make contacts with nationals as quickly as possible.

The University of Lusaka in Zambia was a natural, for I knew of Christian Zambian medical students there through my brother, Pete Stern. Also, the presence of a thriving church in the city, the Lusaka Brethren in Christ church, would provide a discipleship environment for contacts I would make, an important consideration for tentmakers. And so, after several months of correspondence with the head of the surgical department at the university, I arrived in Lusaka in the spring of 1983 to spend five weeks trying out this new style of missions.

The opportunities were beyond my wildest expectations! For one thing, I had a wide variety of cross-cultural contacts: Russians, Irish, Indians, Zambians, patients, townspeople, church members, and government officials; ardent Christians and confessed atheists. I was entertained in several homes: a Nepalese plastic surgeon's and two different Russians—one an anesthesiologist and the other most likely a KGB agent.

A parenthetical comment here with regard to the countries represented on the staff: though there were eight physicians from the Soviet Union and at least four more from other Iron Curtain countries, there was not one from the United States. One can be certain that none of these physicians were in Zambia because it was such a wonderful place to

live or because their salaries were so generous. There were certainly other motives—the leading one, their governments' commitment to spread their influence worldwide. The lack of U.S. physicians does not reflect complementarily upon either the U.S. State Department or the American Christian community. Further, American physicians are sorely needed on the staff at the University of Lusaka. Their know-how and concern for human life would make a significant contribution.

Most of my time was spent at the University hospital, but if I were to assume a permanent position there, part of my duties would be to make periodic teaching visits to mission and other bush hospitals. It could be valuable for mission hospitals to have a friend at the government medical center serving as a liaison, facilitating communication between them, and adding to their referral institutions some of that same compassion and commitment that mission hospitals are famous for.

My most rewarding associations were with the students. More than 30 medical and 70 nursing students are active in the Zambian Christian Medical Fellowship, approximately 20 percent of whom come out of a Brethren in Christ mission background. Even in the short time I was there, I was able to get fairly close to some of these students. They stopped by at my office throughout the day to chat about their learning experiences in school, the political situation in the country, or their own personal problems. They invited me into their dorm rooms where we talked, played chess, and ate together. One Sunday afternoon we visited the zoological and botanical gardens just outside the city, and on another occasion we gathered in one of the homes to play games, sing choruses, and pray.

The level of spiritual commitment among these Christian students surprised me. They continually encouraged and exhorted one another toward consistent Christian living. One evening as I was visiting Godfrey and Boyd (see the article, "What the Law Could Not Do," on page 19) in their dorm room, three nursing students dropped by to talk about a problem with which one of them was wrestling.

Georgina, a first-year student, had been elected president of her class. She had just discovered that one of her duties was to make arrangements for an upcoming disco dance. This would involve arranging for not only the band,

**The opportunities
I found as a
"tentmaker" were
far beyond my
wildest expectations!**

but the beer as well, an integral part of these festivities. She was disturbed by her predicament, wondering what her proper course of action should be as a Christian.

After some discussion, Godfrey suggested we pray, and pray we did for half an hour. As we finished, Georgina said, "Now I know what I must do. I will tell them I cannot arrange for the disco and explain that it is because as a Christian I cannot agree with the things that are done at such a dance. I know I will be ridiculed, but this is what I must do!" As the girls left, we all covenanted to continue supporting Georgina with our prayers as she followed through with her decision.

Potential in Tentmaking Missions

The brief experience I had with these students gave me a bit of an idea of the tremendous potential that exists for helping each one of them to follow on to know the Lord even more fully, to live lives of radical commitment to him, and to consider seriously his call to be missionaries themselves. The vision I would endeavor to share with them is that God is calling them to "go" to staff the existing mission hospitals and other bush and government hospitals; to go not only to other parts of Zambia, but to Malawi, Mozambique, Uganda, and "the uttermost parts of the earth"; and as they go, to "make disciples of all peoples" (Matt. 28:19-20).

In addition, it is not uncommon for tentmaking missionaries to have opportunities to influence government authorities and others in high places because of the nature of their position and the circles in which they move. I had just a brief taste of this, being invited to the prime minister's home for tea on one occasion and a prayer meeting on another. He wanted me to spend an upcoming national holiday with him, saying "I'd like an unhurried time to

chat more with you about a number of matters, to find out your opinions, and share ideas." Unfortunately, however, a previous commitment made this impossible.

My stay in Zambia was brief, but even in that short time I could see great potential for tentmaking missions. The possibilities are not limited to the medical field alone. "Global Opportunities," a monthly publication of Overseas Counseling Service,⁶ lists over 100 different kinds of occupations available overseas, ranging from accounting to electronics, from computer science to photography. As someone has said, there is literally no job or skill that is not usable somewhere overseas. The countries listed where these positions are open are literally in every corner of the earth—in nations where traditional missionaries are welcome and in those where they are not.

Perhaps the following words from two leading contemporary missiologists best summarize the potential in tentmaking missions today:

I feel in my soul that this perhaps is the next great creative movement that God's Spirit is going to bring into existence in missionary efforts . . . We are talking about a project that is at least as big in size as the total missionary movement today and maybe much bigger!⁷

The spiritual potential here is enormous . . . This is the wave of the future.⁸ ■

Footnotes

¹Christy Wilson, Jr., *Today's Tentmakers* (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, 1979).

²John Stewart, *The Nestorian Missionary Enterprise: A Church on Fire* (Edinburgh, Scotland: Clarke, 1923), p. 34.

³*Ibid.*, p. 198.

⁴F. Deaville Walker, *William Carey* (Chicago, Illinois: Moody Press, 1980), p. 191.

⁵Sir Kenneth Grubb, *The Need for Non-Professional Missionaries* (London, England: World Dominion Press, 1931), p. 11.

⁶Overseas Counseling Service, 1600 East Elizabeth, Pasadena, California 91104; (213) 797-1512.

⁷Dr. Waldron Scott stated this before the National Conference of the Association of Church Missions Committees at Wheaton, Illinois, in August, 1977, as he was speaking on "The Student Missions Movement." A cassette tape of this message can be secured from A.C.M.C., 1021 East Walnut Street, Suite 202, Pasadena, California 91106.

⁸Herbert Kane, *Understanding Christian Missions* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker, 1975), p. 405.



What the Law could not do

by Godfrey Biemba

On a Monday in January, 1966, I was taken to school in Savanga township of the Western Province of Zambia to begin Grade 1.

I had heard people talking about God, but it was like a myth to me. I learned at school that man needed to be in communion with God. For this I was told to learn the Ten Commandments and be baptized. I learned all the Ten Commandments by heart. I was instructed to keep all these commandments and if I broke any one of them, I was supposed to confess.

I tried my best *not* to break any because I was taught that if I happened to die before I confessed a broken commandment, I would go into the fire of hell, and that thought was quite frightening to me.

In 1972 I joined a catechism class and was then baptized. My sins were then washed away, I was told. But I still had to confess to God through a priest if I broke any of the commandments.

So I said to myself, "Godfrey, you are now clean, make sure you maintain this cleanliness by not sinning." However, the more I tried not to sin, the more I sinned!

At my confirmation that same year I was told that I was then an "anointed one," and hence I had received the gift of the Holy Spirit to guide my life. "Lucky you," I said to myself, "now you have someone to direct your life."

But I really did not understand who this Holy Spirit was. I continued trying to keep the Ten Commandments, but all in vain! I confessed the same sins over and over again.

When I entered St. John's Secondary School in 1973, I resolved to keep up with my "good life," but became so ashamed that I had to tell the priest the same things every week. I was a miserable person! I finished Form V [graduated from high school] in that struggling state, despite all my involvements in church activities.

In 1978 I entered the University of

Zambia. Here I found a lot of factions: Christian groups, Marxists, Hindus, etc. I went for service every Sunday in one of the lecture rooms, and at times attended some evangelical Christian meetings. But I was disappointed at these meetings because the Christians used a phrase which was completely new to me, "born again." They would also say, "Praise God." Although I had always considered myself a Christian since 1972, I disliked these two phrases, especially "born again"—I hated it! I considered these Christians to be impostors who pretended to be what they weren't.

I continued my own way of life and tried to set up some formulae to avoid breaking the Ten Commandments. For example, I resolved to avoid looking at a girl whenever possible. In fact, I had decided sometime earlier to actually hate women so I wouldn't commit fornication. I tried many other tricks so I would not sin, but found myself sinning all the more. Miserable man I was!

Yet, I would usually argue on God's side whenever people were against God. When I considered myself a Christian, why was it that I continued to sin? This question troubled me a lot!

One day after entering medical school, my roommate asked me to attend an evening service with him at a Brethren in Christ church. I asked what these "revival meetings" were and what we would do there. When he said there would be singing and praying, I said I had no time to waste singing in the evenings at a church, and besides, I had my own church where I went every Sunday.

I tried to set up
some formulae
to avoid breaking
the Ten Commandments

That same evening when my roommate Boyd and three girls returned from the service, they were using Christian language. I asked, "Are you also those people who go around saying 'born again, born again'?" One of the girls, Mutinta, said "Praise God!" I was shocked to hear her use another phrase I did not like. Then I asked them whether, if they died that night, they were sure they would go to heaven. This led to a heated discussion on what it meant to be born again. Since we didn't really come to a conclusion, Mutinta gave me a small tract about salvation and another girl, Esther, invited me to go with them to church the next day.

I went but felt no change within me. What I did feel, however, was an inner urge to continue attending their revival meetings.

One evening sometime later I met Rev. (Pete) Stern in our room. Those three girls were also there. I told Rev. Stern that my problem was that I didn't know what being "born again" was and how I could be assured that I would go to heaven.

Stubborn and argumentative though I was, Rev. Stern did not argue, but just read verse after verse from the Bible. The last verse was I John 5:13, I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life." He asked me if I was ready to pray with him. I said, "Yes." So we prayed together.

Nothing so spectacular in the form of a miracle happened that night, yet the greatest miracle actually happened in my heart! This I know for sure because *now I am a changed man*. Rev. Stern had shown me that my own efforts would yield nothing, that I was a sinner and needed to repent.

Now I rejoice in God's salvation because he has shown me the sinfulness of my sins and how much I needed him in my life. He has shown me the futility of my own efforts and the futility of human wisdom. He has shown me how gracious he is. My own efforts to be righteous have proved useless. He has opened my eyes to see his righteousness and has made me accept it. He has shown me that salvation is through *one* person, Jesus Christ; that it is only through him that I can reach God. Christ is my mediator and the *only* mediator.

The Law of God has become a help and *not* an obstacle in my life now. My religiosity has been changed to Christianity. I am saved! ■

Christian Education in the Church

While the General Conference Board of Christian Education serves the entire denomination from a central location, six regional boards plan and implement programs to meet the Christian Education needs within their regions. Following are reports from three of the regional conferences. Reports from the Allegheny, Canadian and Pacific Conferences will be featured later.

Atlantic Conference

At the last meeting of the Atlantic Conference Board of Christian Education we asked ourselves, what does or should this board do? Our replies reflected a broad range of ministries. We work with Sunday school programs, sponsor mar-

riage enrichment retreats, work at leadership training, take part in the quizzing program, hold youth retreats, and more.

Ken Letner, whose services we share with the General Conference has been a special blessing to us. He has helped especially in setting up retreats such as the annual marriage enrichment retreat at Kenbrook, and in making contacts with local congregations. Those of us on the regional board also appreciate the way he has taken the routine paperwork out of our hands and dispatched it so efficiently.

The heart of our ministry lies not in our board meetings, where we work at budgeting and initiating, understanding and guiding. Rather the heart of our ministry lies in each of specific ministries carried out. The marriage enrichment retreat, staffed by Marriage Enrichment, Incorporated, has strengthened many relationships within the conference. Last year the couples who tried to attend were kept away by the snow (Valentine's weekend didn't work that time). Those who could reschedule came back in the summer. This year we look to strengthen our families again with the retreat in February.

The youth, under Phil Byers' leadership as chairman of the youth task force, carry on some of our most active programs.



Frank Fimiano (left), chairman of the General Conference Board of Christian Education, and his wife Diane talk with Joe Hyatt, Mim Heisey and Scott Heisey.

Teacher training class held at the church in Roanoke, Va.

Reports from the regional conferences



These include a weekend at Harvey Cedars, a regular program of rollerskating at Mt. Gretna, an annual youth rally at one of the regional conference's churches, and youth activities at the annual meeting of the Regional Conference.

Charlie Crider has promoted quizzing enthusiastically throughout the conference. As a result, Atlantic Conference quizzing regularly includes more than 10 congregations; last year 11 churches sponsored teams during the year. The quiz task force also sponsors other activities through the year to promote fellowship among the quizzers and their friends. Last December, for example, they gathered together for a Christmas party.

Under Ken Letner's guidance we have held various workshops in Pennsylvania and Virginia, focusing on teacher training, learning activities for children, and handling behavior challenges. A special workshop was held to help youth leaders on topics ranging from "Feelings of Inadequacy" to "Joe Who? Snagging the Inactive," from "Games for Youth to Grow By" to "Relating between the Times."

With all that is happening in our conference activities, we recognize many areas are still untouched. We are considering many options for expanding our ministry—to singles/divorced/widowed; to the family as a whole; to families and individuals saturated with television and media; to greater inter-congregational fellowship; to helping develop effective Christian parenting skills; to encouraging the movement of Christian education into outreach and evangelism; to . . . but the list of potential areas, like the list of present ministries, goes on and on.

We carry out our work as a board, overseeing and coordinating all of these programs, with prayer and with care. Observing the hard work and serious searching that board members put into our task has given me a new and abiding appreciation for all who commit themselves to building up God's Kingdom. That task, that mission, lies behind every planning session and every budget meeting.

Daryl R. Climenhaga
Chairman, Atlantic Conference
Board of Christian Education

Midwest Conference

The Midwest Conference Board of Christian Education has been and will continue to be a very important part of the Christian growth of our churches and their members. With 13 churches in six states spread over a distance of approximately 1500 miles, we are always looking for better ways to reach and involve more of our people. At present we have our board divided into four task forces: Sunday school, youth, family, and wilderness camping.

The Sunday school task force has been active in helping the general board promote denominational Sunday school material and other programs. The last few years they have sponsored a teachers' retreat starting Friday evening and going through Saturday. The General Conference board has provided us with an excellent resource person and material each year. We feel that the retreats have been a real learning experience and blessing for all who have attended.

The home and family task force has been sponsoring a family weekend retreat in eastern Oklahoma, featuring a family canoe trip down the river. There is also an excellent leader from the denomination to share with each family and help them renew their spiritual togetherness. This year there were over 100 in attendance with Bishop Don Shafer as our leader.

The youth task force has concentrated its activities on a yearly youth camp that has been held in Colorado or Kansas. Though it involves a lot of work for the leader and many miles of travel for many youth, it has proven to be well worth the effort to see life-changing decisions being made by some and others being spiritually renewed. In addition, the youth task force will be helping to promote the denominational youth conference in December at French Lick, IN., as well as encouraging and assisting any church wanting to have a quiz team.

The task force on wilderness camping was new for us last year. After hearing reports of this sort of camping being highly successful, this group has been working to find suitable

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Karen Brubaker (Fairview, Ohio) in her summer service assignment at Camp Lakeview, Mich.



sites and qualified leaders. We plan to have our first outing this summer.

Future plans for the board as a whole include continuing to help Sunday schools to encourage and improve Sunday school attendance. We also are looking for ways to meet the needs of adult singles in our conference.

Don Hostetter
Chairman, Midwest Conference
Board of Christian Education

Central Conference

The work of the Central Conference Board of Christian Education includes ministry to youth, adults, and local congregations.

The board oversees the youth program for the Central Conference in the areas of Bible quizzing and summer camping. Mr. Dick Erbaugh of the Highland Brethren in Christ Church is the quizzing director. This is his second year serving in this position. Before accepting his present position, he served as quizzing coach for the Highland teams.

Pastor Ron Slabaugh has assumed the responsibility of camping director starting with the 1984 camping season. The camp season runs for two weeks at the Camp Lakeview facility in Goodrich, MI. The juniors participate in the first week of the program and the teens participate in the second week. Approximately 100 juniors and fifty teens take advantage of the camping program. Ron is pastor of the Mooretown Brethren in Christ congregation. He and his wife, Janice, have been very active in the

Junior camp program and serve on the Camp Lakeview Board of Directors.

With a concern for ministry to adults, the board is sponsoring Dr. Andrew Stoner to speak during the week of Memorial Holiness camp meeting, focusing on family and marriage concerns. He will also be available for individual counseling sessions during the week.

The board's ministry to the local congregation includes promoting the International Sunday School Convention held in Detroit, MI in October. To get an accurate survey of resources within the local congregations of the Central Conference as well as to receive feedback, the Central Conference board circulated a questionnaire concerning resources and needs. The list of resource persons that we received as well as the area of their expertise was circulated to the local congregations as a source of information.

Tim Herr
Chairman, Central Conference
Board of Christian Education



Dick Erbaugh congratulates the Nappanee, Ind., quiz team as they win Central Conference quizzing in 1983.



MCC photo by Jim King

Religion often more a stimulant than a sedative in strife troubling the world

An analysis by Charles J. Hanley, Associated Press

KANSAS CITY (EP)—Marx called it “the opiate of the people.” But religion today is more stimulant than sedative in much of the strife troubling the world.

Moslem against Christian, Catholic against Protestant, Hindu against Buddhist—the cross and crescent fly once again among the emblems of battle. Sectarian conflict bloodies Belfast’s alleyways, Beirut’s streets, Sri Lanka’s village lanes. Many of these confrontations, such as those in Lebanon and Northern Ireland, may be better described as ideological, ethnic or class struggles, not religious. But religion helps shape and nurture them, long ago by creating an “us-against-them” social system, today by feeding the fears and prejudices against non-believers.

Moorhead Kennedy, executive director of New York’s Council for International Understanding, says religion is an underlying—and underestimated—element behind much of the world’s violence. Mr. Kennedy, a retired U.S. Foreign Service officer who is a longtime student of Islam, has firsthand knowledge of religion’s political power. He was one of those held hostage for 444 days by Islamic militants at the Tehran embassy.

Even when religion is not on the front line, it can affect the conflict. Because they believe in reincarnation, Lebanon’s tough Druse militiamen are fearless in the face of death. Iran’s Shiite Moslems embrace the idea of dying in battle, a martyrdom that guarantees entrance to heaven. India’s Sikh terrorists are inheri-

tors of a religion that glorifies the martial spirit, much as the Shinto creed inspired pre-World War II militarism in Japan.

The swift pace of modernization and Westernization in the late 20th century is stirring the soul of religious militancy, Mr. Kennedy said. “In the Third World, one result of the penetration by the West is the likelihood of a religious reaction, because people won’t take too much change,” he said in an interview.

Edward Said, a Palestinian-born Columbia University professor and leading American interpreter of Mideast culture, finds such an anti-West reaction behind Lebanon’s sectarian agonies. “The Maronites in Lebanon see themselves as the representatives of Christianity, Europe, the West—as opposed to the others, who are Arab, Islamic,” he said.

Mr. Kennedy said: “We’ve never really gotten over the Crusades.”

Here is a capsulized look at religion and conflict around the globe:

Lebanon—For centuries a mountain refuge for persecuted sects, Lebanon today is an ecumenical slaughterhouse. Despite an overlay of superpower rivalry, the basic struggle still echoes the Crusader era—a clash between dominant “Western” Christians and poorer “Eastern” Moslems. At least 17 recognized religious communities crowd this tiny land of 3.5 million people. They include about 1 million Shiite Moslems, almost as many Sunni Moslems, 200,000

members of the Islamic-descended Druse sect, and 1.4 million Christians, mostly members of the Maronite sect.

The legacy is bloody and old. A century ago, tradition says, 20,000 Christians were massacred by Druses in the Chouf Mountains. More recently—in the period from the 1975-76 civil war to the aftermath of the 1982 Israeli invasion—probably 70,000 Lebanese have been killed.

Druse and Moslem groups, regarding themselves as a downtrodden majority, formed a largely leftist camp and allied themselves with socialist, Moslem and Soviet-supported Syria. The right-wing Christians turned to the United States. American Marines landed in Beirut in two crises, in 1958 and 1982, to help prop up Christian-led governments.

Afghanistan—When rebel tribesmen banded together in 1979, they called themselves “Teiman Atahad-Islami”—“Those who have sworn to fight for Islam.” To the tribesmen, their Moslem fundamentalist struggle against Afghanistan’s Marxist government and Soviet troops is a “jihad,” a holy war, against godless communism and Western-style modernization. Traditional religious elders lead two major rebel groups.

Arabs-Israelis—Five major wars, tens of thousands of dead, international tensions stretching over decades—all have grown from the clash of two peoples, Arab and Jew, over a strip of land each regards as their birthright.

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Strife troubling the world . . .

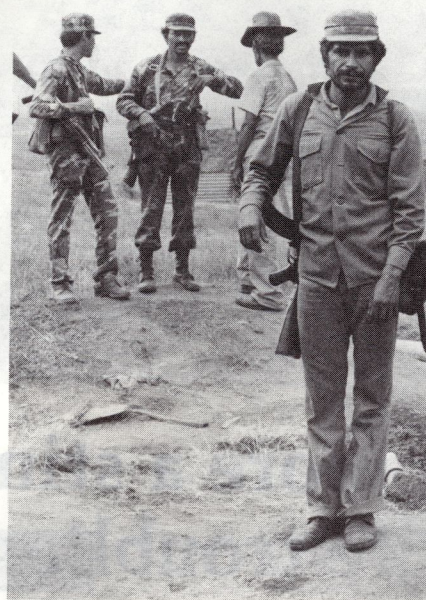
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In some respects, the conflict is ethnic, economic and ideological, but the religious element is ever-present. Those who govern Israel cite biblical "title" when they lay Jewish claim to the Arab-populated West Bank of the Jordan River. And generations of Arab leaders have summoned their people to a "jihad" to "liberate" Moslem shrines under Israeli control.

Iran-Iraq—"This is not a conventional war," Iranian ground forces commander Col. Sayyed Shirazi has said. "It is a war of faith."

Iran's border conflict with Iraq is the world's bloodiest war—unconfirmed U.S. reports say at least 175,000 people have been killed in three years—and is probably the most "religious." It mirrors the historic schism between the austere Shiite sect of Iran's Persians and the more pragmatic Sunni sect of most Arabs.

The Philippines—The traditional Moslem credo divides the world into the "Land of Islam" and the "Land of War." The farthest frontier of the "Land of War" today lies in the jungles of Minda-



MCC photo by Joetta Handrich Schlabach

nao and the Sulu Islands, in the southern Philippines. Separatist guerrillas among that region's 2.5 million Moslems have been fighting to end domination and encroachment by the Philippines' Roman Catholic Majority of 42 million.

Northern Ireland—The guerrilla Irish Republican Army, overwhelmingly Roman Catholic, is waging underground

war to remove Northern Ireland—Protestant population 1 million, Catholics 500,000—from the United Kingdom and to unite it with the largely Catholic Irish Republic to the south.

Though usually identified as a "Catholic vs. Protestant" conflict, Northern Ireland's troubles have many dimensions. It is a nationalist struggle, a campaign against anti-Catholic economic discrimination and for civil rights, a revolution by IRA Marxists, a battle against terrorism of both sides.

The sectarian streak is unmistakable, however. Old religious fears always loom near at hand, especially among the Protestants, who worry that a "Papist" takeover of all Ireland would threaten their rights to divorce and contraception, would undermine Protestant education, and might even jeopardize their community's future.

India—A teeming patchwork of humanity, India cannot escape religious friction and fire. In the eastern state of Assam, more than 3,200 persons were killed this year in clashes between Hindu natives and Moslem immigrants from nearby Bangladesh.

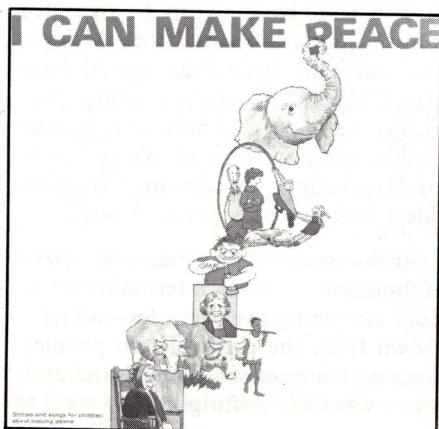
Another religious conflict tears at India's heartland. Militants among Punjab state's turbaned Sikhs, a sect that rejects Hindu polytheism, demand more religious and political autonomy, including an independent, Vatican-like status for their holy city of Amritsar. More than 200 persons have been killed since 1980, including Hindu priests hacked to death in their temples.

Sri Lanka—A thousand years of animosity between this island's two ethnic-religious groups—the majority Buddhist Sinhalese and the minority Hindu Tamils—boils over regularly in communal warfare. Last July almost 400 persons, mostly Tamils, were killed in rioting that erupted after Tamil separatists ambushed an army patrol.

Elsewhere—Religion sharpens the contrasts—and deepens the hatreds—between warring factions in Ethiopia, where mostly Moslem secessionists fight a Christian-Marxist central government; Chad, where a split between the Moslem north and southern tribal blacks sparked seemingly endless civil war 17 years ago; Cyprus, where an uneasy truce line separates Greek Orthodox from Turkish Moslems; and Syria, where the minority Alawite Moslem leadership crushed an uprising by fundamentalist Sunni Moslems.

Peace story album produced for children

AKRON, Pa.—*I Can Make Peace* is a new record album for children ages 5 to 10, featuring stories and songs about peacemaking. It explores themes such as backyard and family peacemaking, learning to forgive, loving enemies and peacemaking in times of war.



The aim is to provide alternative entertainment for children, who are exposed to many stories with violent heroes and heroines.

Through the record the children will meet Martin, a child who wants to do something important; Congo, an elephant who learns to forgive, and Muriel Lester, an Englishwoman who followed Christ's way of peace rather than contributing to war efforts.

I Can Make Peace was produced in recognition of the 40th anniversary of MCC Peace Section.

The record will be distributed through groups who co-published the record with MCC: Mennonite Publishing House in Scottdale, Pa.; Faith and Life Press, Newton, Kan.; Church of the Brethren, Elgin, Ill., and the Commission on Peace and Social Concerns of the Brethren in Christ Church, P.O. Box 27, Mount Joy, Pa. 17552, \$7.95 (U.S.) and \$9.55 (Canada), postpaid.

For more information contact any of the co-publishers or MCC.

MCCers give cooking demonstrations in refugee camp

Somalia—In the late 1970s, thousands of Ethiopian refugees fled the fighting and hunger they knew in their homeland. For the refugees now settled in United Nations camps in Somalia, the move not only meant leaving their home, it meant learning to grow and eat new foods.

Mennonite Central Committee workers Peg Short and Barb Thuma have been teaching classes on gardening of new crops as well as preparation of new foods for nearly a year in the 18 sections of the Buurdhubo Camp.

Short, originally from Wauseon, Ohio, describes the process for setting up the demonstrations, which she says are very popular with the camp women. The weekly demonstrations rotate from section to section of the camp which is home for several thousand refugees. First Thuma and Short visit the leader of the section where they want to hold the next demonstration, who in turn introduces them to the women's leader in each section. The women's leader then is responsible to establish a time and day that the women can come to participate in the class. Coming up with a time is difficult for the women since they gather wood, carry water, work in the fields, and cook and care for their families, according to Short.

Thuma, a member of the Pleasant Hill, Ohio, Brethren in Christ Church, says, "I think the demonstrations are really well received—they're like a 'happening' and I personally think they're fun."

An average of 50 women attend each demonstration with "as many children and a few curious men," according to Short. "There is always interest in what we are doing. The crowd first gathers out of curiosity and then begins to grow."

During the time that Short is demonstrating the preparation of new foods—including sweet potatoes, pumpkin, okra, onions, green peppers and tomatoes—Thuma gives gardening hints for raising these crops.

For example, during a sweet potato

cooking demonstration Short showed how to fry or boil the potatoes and encouraged the women to add the green potato leaves to the fried potatoes since they provide a good source of iron. Short reports that usually when she mentions that they should add the leaves, she gets a negative reaction, because "it is something that you feed to your goats." She then points out that maize, the most popular food with the refugees, is something that goats also eat.

While Short cooks the potatoes, Thuma describes where the women can obtain vines, planting distances for the vines, time to plant, how to plant, care for the planting during the growing season and time until harvest.

Short says that she tries to teach nutrition during her cooking demonstrations. In addition to her advice on putting potato leaves in with fried potatoes, she encourages women to leave the skins on potatoes since skins have a high vitamin content. She also advises the women to reuse the potato water for soup or sauce to take advantage of the minerals which dissolve in the cooking water. She stresses the importance of washing vegetables before preparing them.

Only 15 percent of the families living in the camps have a plot of land for farming, which is only 1/6 acre. Plots are all irrigated with pumped water from a nearby river. The farming families sell their excess crops to others in the camps. Women, men and children all work the plots.

Thuma has encouraged families to grow small gardens close to their homes. She is also encouraging papaya trees since fruit is not readily available in the camps. "The nice thing about papaya is that you can go from seed to fruit within a year," she comments.

The demonstrations sometimes get a little disorderly. "We deal with various interruptions, such as some women disciplining the children, and others interpreting what I just said. Sometimes it gets so noisy you can hardly speak, but we feel the message gets across somehow" says Short.

Short describes one reaction to a well-attended cooking demonstration: "Recently a woman told me that I didn't teach her anything new and that she should have gone down to the farm like she had planned to. The other women told me not to pay attention to her because she talks a lot. I found it interesting that she stayed until I was finished."

MCC currently has three workers in the Buurdhubo Camp. They are involved in health, nutrition, agriculture and job creation.

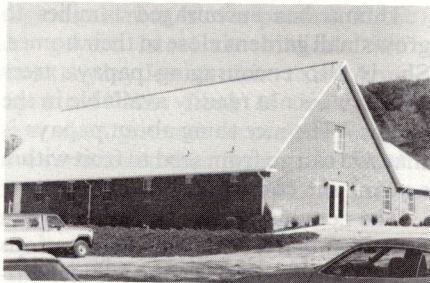


MCCer Peg Short demonstrates preparation of sweet potatoes in Somali refugee camp while women help.

Frances Weaver-Grill

church news

Allegheny Conference



Canoe Creek congregation, Hollidaysburg, Pa., combined their 50th anniversary, homecoming and dedication of their new sanctuary in a special service Oct. 30. Participating were former pastors John Bickler and Ross Morningstar, and Bishop Alvin Book. Construction proceeded as money became available, and along with much donated labor by the members and the community, the congregation was able to dedicate their building debt free.

The **Cedar Grove** congregation, Mifflintown, Pa., held a missionary conference on Nov. 19 and 20. Marilyn Ebersole, Ray and Winnie Hock, and representatives from Vision in Action, Waynesboro, Pa., shared in the conference. • Rev. and Mrs. John Fries were installed as the pastoral couple of the **Dillsburg**, Pa., congregation on Sunday morning, Dec. 4. Bishop Alvin Book presented the message. A get-acquainted fellowship was held in the evening.

Ten persons were received into fellowship by the **Five Forks** congregation, Waynesboro, Pa., on Sunday, Dec. 11. • The **Pleasant View** congregation, Red Lion, Pa., reports holding a concert in November which was very well attended.

A missions conference was held by the **Waynesboro**, Pa., congregation on Nov. 17-20. The speaker was Rev. Ed Schuit who represents the work of the Africa Inland Mission.

WANT TO HELP AT CONFERENCE?

Persons are needed to help in providing secretarial service, page service and other types of service connected with the General Secretary's office at the July General Conference at Messiah College.

If you are interested, contact Arthur M. Climenhaga at the following address as soon as possible:

1125 West Arrow Highway,
Apt. 14
Upland, CA 91786
Phone (714) 985-1215

Atlantic Conference

Rev. Kenneth Engle, pastor of the **Conoy** congregation spoke at the Community Thanksgiving service in Elizabethtown, Pa. • The **Holden Park** congregation, Orlando, Fl., reports that a covered dish fellowship dinner which was recently held was well attended. The film "Hazel's People" was also shown.

The **Mount Pleasant** congregation recently received two persons into membership and dedicated two baby girls. The morning of child dedication, 146 persons were present to enjoy Bishop John Byer's sermon, "Highly Favored."

Mary Elizabeth and Harold Engle were honored recently by the **Palmyra**, Pa., congregation. A surprise "This is Your Life" program was held to honor the deacon couple.

The **Shenks Church**, Elizabethtown, Pa., reports holding a Lay Witness Mission. Weekly sharing groups are continuing to meet in homes of the congregation. • Six persons were recently received into fellowship by the **Souderton**, Pa., congregation.

Canadian Conference

A slide presentation of activities of the **Falls View Church**, Niagara Falls, Ont., was shown to the congregation by Lester Fretz on Nov. 6. • The **Heise Hill** congregation, Gormley, Ont., heard a musical group and speaker from the Ontario Bible College on Nov. 20.

Rev. Edward Rickman was the evangelist for revival services held by the **Houghton** congregation, Langton, Ont., during the month of November. • A reception was held by the **Ridgemount** congregation, Hamilton, Ont., for their pastoral couple, Rev. and Mrs. Vern Bosserman, following his ordination service recently. Bishop Harvey Sider and Dr. Bruce Hicks, brother-in-law of Rev. Bosserman, participated in the service.

The **Rosebank** congregation, Petersburg, Ont., reports holding a consecration service for their deacon couple, Richard and Carol Dorsch on Sunday, Dec. 11. Bishop Harvey Sider lead in the service. • Recent guests of the **Westheights** congregation, Kitchener, Ont., were Stan and Diane Friesen, directors of the Threshold Coffeehouse Centre in Cochrane, Ont. They spoke, sang and showed slides of their work.

POSITION AVAILABLE

Applications are now being received for the position of Director of Nursing at Messiah Village. A B.S. degree in nursing is preferred. Contact the personnel office of Messiah Village, 100 Mt. Allen Drive, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055. (717) 697-4666.

Central Conference

A November missions conference was shared by the three Tennessee churches: **DeRossett**, Sparta; **Pomeroy Chapel**, Smithville; and **Rolling Acres**, McMinnville. Speaking in the various sessions were Bill and Mary Hoke, Paul Hensel, and Louis Cober. • The **Bethel** congregation, Merrill, Mi., reports holding revival services in November. Rev. Bedsaul Agee was the evangelist and Rev. and Mrs. Mar-Joe Wooten, Breckenridge, Mi., served as song evangelists.

A building expansion program was begun by the **Fairview**, Oh., congregation on Jan. 14 with a kick-off dinner. Rev. Louis Cober was the guest speaker. Plans are to raise \$100,000.00 for expanding the educational and fellowship facilities.

Warren Hoffman, church planting pastor at Oklahoma City, Ok., (Midwest Conference) was the guest speaker for spiritual renewal services held by the **Highland** congregation, West Milton, Oh., on Jan. 21-25.

Midwest Conference

The **Mountain View** congregation hosted a Christmas Eve candlelight service for the **New Harvest Church**, both of Colorado Springs, Co. Both Pastors Whittington and Lewis shared in the service.

• A 45% increase in membership has been realized by the **Oklahoma City**, Ok., congregation over the past year. Sunday morning attendance reached 61 on Dec. 4, reports the pastor, Warren Hoffman.

Pacific Conference

The Deacon Board of the **Upland**, Ca., congregation has begun a Congregational Life Prayer Meeting—an opportunity once a month for all concerned persons in the congregation to gather in prayer for the church.

For The Record...

Births

Anderson: Jeremy Roger, June 9; Doyle and Stephanie (Arnold) Anderson, West Shore congregation, Pa.

Anderson: Joshua Aaron, Oct. 2; David and Janet (Peniea) Anderson, West Shore congregation, Pa.

Baczynski: Steven William, Oct. 6; Michael and Pat Baczynski, Bertie congregation, Ont.

Ciampa: Amy Sue, Nov. 17; Rev. Dale and Rhoda Ciampa, Jemison Valley congregation, Pa.

Ditson: Joel Benjamin, July 2; Barry and Ruth (Francis) Ditson, Kindersley congregation, Sask.

Engle: Shannon Rae, Nov. 14; Howard and Holly Engle, Zion congregation, Ks.

Gaster: Lydia June, Oct. 27; Ed and Maryalice Gaster, Palmyra congregation, Pa.

Heise: Laura Anne, Sept. 18; Keith and Susan (Engle) Heise, Albuquerque, N.M.

Evangelical Visitor

Homsher: Amy Kathryn, Nov. 14; Larry and Heidi Homsher, Refton congregation, Pa.

Hooten: Rachel Kristine, Nov. 25; Robert and Patricia Hooten, Rosebank congregation, Ont.

Houck: Joy Lynn, Oct. 29; Rev. J. Daniel and Sharon Houck, Shenks congregation, Pa.

Johnson: Joel Chandler, July 20; Joe and Patricia (Hunsburger) Johnson, West Shore congregation, Pa.

Keslick: Teneal Lynne, Oct. 18; Randy and Colleen (Storey) Keslick, Kindersley congregation, Sask.

Lanman: John David, Nov. 21; Dwight and Sarah Lanman, Christian Union congregation, In.

Laperriere: Michelle Catherine, Oct. 25; Nor-mand and Catherine Laperriere, Bridlewood congregation, Ont.

Martin: Sarah Jane, Sept. 27; Melvin and Dianne Martin, Shenks congregation, Pa.

Musser: Adam Jeffrey, Nov. 21; Jeff and Pat Musser, Skyline View congregation, Pa.

Ostroski: Mark Bernard, Dec. 3; Barry and Ginny Ostroski, Skyline View congregation, Pa.

Rung: Jeffery Wayne, Aug. 18; Wayne and Joan Rung, Montoursville congregation, Pa.

Sachs: Daniel Walker, Nov. 21; Doug and Marilyn Sachs, Manor congregation, Pa.

Schreier: Holly Michelle, July 12; Dave and Cindy Schreier, Mt. View congregation, Co.

Seidel: Chad Michael, Oct. 26; Fred and Susan (Climenhaga) Seidel, Kindersley congregation, Sask.

Stayman: Devin Roy, Oct. 27; Dale and Debbie Stayman, Antrim congregation, Pa.

Thompson: Karina Dawn, Aug. 3; Rev. Robert and Carol Ann Thompson, Kindersley congregation, Sask.

Wagner: Michael James, Nov. 10; Mr. and Mrs. Carl Wagner Jr., Pequea congregation, Pa.

Whitehouse: Emily Lane, Nov. 21; Paul and Sharon Whitehouse, Silverdale congregation, Pa.

Weddings

Bender-Lesher: Melinda Kay, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Marvin M. Lesher, and Stephen Ross, son of Mr. and Mrs. Richard G. Bender Sr., Dec. 10, in the Chambersburg Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. James Lesher, uncle of the bride, and Rev. A. G. Brubaker Jr. officiating.

Fischer-Hoover: Cindy Louise, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Hoover, and Gary Wayne Fischer, Colorado Springs, Co., Nov. 26, in the Glen Eyrie Castle of the Navigators International headquarters with Rev. John Edwards officiating.

Heise-Leonard: Joyce, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Leonard, Owen Sound, Ont., and Doyle K., son of Mr. and Mrs. Harold M. Heise, Gormley, Ont., Oct. 22, in the Emmanuel Bible College Chapel, Kitchener, with Dr. Thomas Dow officiating.

Hess-Martin: Vonita, daughter of Mrs. Joan Martin, Marion, Pa., and Daniel, son of Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Hess, New Franklin, Pa., Nov. 12, in the Antrim Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Wilbur Benner officiating.

Heyer-Webb: Frances F. Webb, Ajax, Ont., and Robert H. Heyer, Toronto, Ont., Nov. 26, in

the Bridlewood Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Leonard J. Chester officiating.

Karr-Putman: Nancy, daughter of Walter and Vera Putman, and Wallace, son of Rodney and Lucille Karr, Dec. 10, in the Bertie Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Ross Nigh officiating.

Lundy-Pharis: Theresa, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Pharis, and Doug Lundy, both of Williamsport, Pa., Sept. 24, in the Montoursville Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Larry Strouse officiating.

Shannon-Musser: Jaylene, daughter of Chester and Ruth Musser, and Ronald, son of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Shannon, Nov. 25, with Rev. Harvey Musser and Rev. C. R. Burgard officiating.

Steger-Kuhn: Deborah, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Kuhn, and Dean, son of Mr. and Mrs. Donald Steger, both of Clarence, NY, Oct. 15, in the Clarence Center Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. David Croxford officiating.

Tome-Gobrecht: Karen, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Gobrecht, Hanover, Pa., and David, son of Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Tome, Broque, Pa., Oct. 22, in St. Bartholomew Union Church.

Correction: The wedding date for Robert Paterson and Daryl Fazekas was June 11 rather than July 11, as reported in the November 1983 *Visitor*.

Obituaries

Connolly: Margaret S. Connolly, Telford, Pa., born Aug. 16, 1913, died Dec. 3, 1983. She was the daughter of Walter P. and Annie Bernard Smith. She was married to Joseph T. Connolly who preceded her in death. She is survived by a son, Joseph T. Jr.; two daughters: Marjorie Frey and Joann Wood; eleven grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; a brother; and three sisters. Rev. Omer King conducted the funeral service. Interment was in the Whitemarsh Memorial Park.

Curtis: Edna Switzer Curtis, born Oct. 14, 1915 in Thomas, Ok., died Dec. 20, 1983 in Upland, Ca. In Oct. 1982 she was married to Wayne Curtis who survives. Also surviving are her stepmother, Bertha Switzer; three sisters: Mrs. Jason Zook, Marie and Lavina Switzer; two stepdaughters; and a stepsister. She was a member of the Upland Brethren in Christ Church where she served as deaconess. She served as a missionary in Africa from 1952-1978 and also taught in the Jabbok Bible School in Oklahoma, and Western Christian Academy in California. The funeral service was conducted by Rev. Robert Hempy and Rev. Alvin C. Burkholder. A tribute from the Board for Missions was presented by Dr. Arthur Climenhaga. Entombment was in the Bellevue Mausoleum.

Disher: Bentley Disher, Wellandport, Ont., born Feb. 29, 1910, died Sept. 20, 1983. He was married to Hazel Fralick Disher who survives. Also surviving are a son, Howard; a daughter, Beverly Mater; a foster son, John Walton; six grandchildren; a brother; and a sister. Rev. W. Edward Rickman conducted the funeral service in the Wainfleet Brethren in Christ Church. Interment was in the Maple Lawn Cemetery.

Gearhart: Ralph C. Gearhart, born Oct. 31, 1913, died Oct. 1, 1983. He was married to Fannie Koser Gearhart who survives. Also surviving are six sons; two daughters; two stepsons; two stepdaughters; eleven grandchildren; eleven stepgrandchildren; and three sisters. He was a member of the Shenks Brethren in Christ Church. Rev. J. Daniel Hock and Rev. Isaac Kanode conducted the funeral service. Interment was in the Shenks Cemetery.

Hutchinson: Eva Hutchinson, Breezewood, Pa., born April 22, 1905, died Dec. 4, 1983 in Bedford Co. Hospital. She was the daughter of Jesse and Ella Gray. She was married to David Hutchinson who preceded her in death. She is survived by two sons: George and Carl; a daughter, Dora Yoder; three sisters; eight grandchildren; and fourteen great-grandchildren. A daughter, Sue Steward, also preceded her in death. She was a member of the Cedar Grove Brethren in Christ Church where the funeral service was conducted by Rev. M. Eugene Heidler. Interment was in the Westminster Presbyterian Cemetery.

Ickes: Margaret Ickes, Port Royal, Pa., born April 4, 1909 in Sparta, Tn., died Nov. 25, 1983 in the Lewistown Hospital. She was the daughter of Barry and Lodema Wilson. She was married to Ronald Ickes who preceded her in death. She is survived by a daughter, Mrs. Cecil Reed; two brothers: Arless Wilson and Earl Wilson; and five grandchildren. Rev. M. Eugene Heidler officiated at the funeral service. Interment was in St. Paul's Lutheran Cemetery.

Kipe: David Kipe, Clarence, NY., born Sept. 7, 1920, died Nov. 9, 1983. He was the son of Katie and George Kipe. He is survived by his mother; wife, Jean Davis Kipe; a son; a daughter; and six grandchildren. Rev. David Croxford conducted the funeral service in the Clarence Center Brethren in Christ Church.

Musser: Harold C. Musser, Upland, Ca., died Nov. 15, 1983 at the age of 73. He was the son of Sumner and Areta Musser. He was married to Elva Musser who survives. Also surviving are two sons: Gary and Carl; a daughter, Gail Raser; seven grandchildren; three sisters; and three brothers. He was a member of the Upland Brethren in Christ Church where he served as deacon. The funeral service was conducted in the Upland Church with entombment in the Bellevue Mausoleum.

Nissley: Mary M. Nissley, formerly of Mt. Joy, Pa., born May 7, 1892, died Nov. 14, 1983 in the Brethren Village, Lancaster, Pa. She was married to Samuel K. Nissley who preceded her in death in 1960. She is survived by three children: Orpha N. Gish, Samuel H., and J. Ernest; eleven grandchildren; seventeen great-grandchildren. She was a member of the Cross Roads Brethren in Christ Church. Rev. Arthur H. Brubaker conducted the funeral service. Interment was in the Cross Road Cemetery.

Smith: Harry U. Smith, Mifflintown, Pa., born July 10, 1905, died Nov. 9, 1983 in the Lewistown Hospital. He was the son of Ulysses Grant and Minnie Smith. He was married to Cora Bolton Smith who preceded him in death. He later married Rena Dysinger Smith who survives. Also surviving are a daughter, Mrs. Frank Alberti; a stepson; four stepdaughters; a brother, James; three sisters: Mary Smith, Margaret McClure and Helen Kurtz; and eleven grandchildren. Rev. M. Eugene Heidler conducted the funeral service. Interment was in the Adams Cemetery.

Wingert: Merle L. Wingert, born March 24, 1910 in Chambersburg, Pa., died Nov. 29, 1983 in the Chambersburg Hospital. He was married to Catherine Sollenberger Wingert who survives; two daughters, Janet W. Kirkpatrick and Fern G. Shoop; a son, Ray E.; six grandchildren; and a sister, Mary Byers. He was a member of the Chambersburg Brethren in Christ Church. Rev. Michael Knowles, Bishop Charlie Byers, and Rev. A. G. Brubaker Jr. officiated at the funeral service. Interment was in the Air Hill Cemetery.

Still Time to Invest in an IRA for 1983

Even though we are well into 1984, there is yet time for most United States income tax payers to invest in an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) for the 1983 tax year. Designed for wage earners under 70 years of age, it is an excellent way to defer some income taxes until retirement years.

When you place your IRA account with the Jacob Engle Foundation, you not only help yourself, you are also helping to finance new churches, pastors' homes or other church projects. Contact the office now for the proper forms:

Jacob Engle Foundation, Inc.
P.O. Box 1136, Upland, CA 91786
or call (714) 985-8200

If you live in the Allegheny or Atlantic Conferences, you may contact:
Eastern Office, Jacob Engle Foundation, Inc.
P.O. Box A, Grantham, PA 17027
or call (717) 697-2634

Visit the Stewardship Display at your Regional Conference

When you attend your regional conference in March or April, be sure to stop by the display provided by the Commission on Stewardship and Finance. There you will find materials about:

- *Brethren in Christ ministries of your regional conference and the General Conference
- *Cooperative Ministries and Mission
- *Christian estate planning and giving
- *Investing in the Brotherhood Loan Fund
- *Other services provided by the Jacob Engle Foundation, Inc.

With each display will be someone who is qualified to help you find answers to your questions. Please stop by and visit with us!

Stewardship Principles from Proverbs #4

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Prov. 9:10).

Wisdom in a general sense goes one step further than knowledge in that it takes the body of truth which knowledge provides and decides how it shall be used. A simple example: it is common knowledge that food is absolutely essential to keep the physical body strong. But too much food results in obesity, a hindrance to enjoying maximum strength for daily living. Wisdom is the virtue that takes this knowledge and brings together food and the physical body in the right proportion, so as to attain good health. The ultimate is good management of both food and the physical body. Some people reach this goal entirely independent of any personal relationship with the Lord, while others need his assistance. Either way, it is good stewardship in the physical realm.

An example that is more comprehensive and exemplifies the combination of wisdom, good stewardship, and the fear of the the Lord is found in the life of Joseph. His moral decisions and ethical values reflect the best of wisdom and stewardship when temptations to bitterness, fornication, self-assertion and personal egotism are held firmly in control. Today, the failures of youth are often blamed on poor home and environmental situations. Joseph had parents who were partial, brothers who were envious, he was sold into slavery, and confronted by an alluring superior, but he managed the situations to his credit.

Joseph must have been a man who was efficient and effective in his daily ministries. When in Potiphar's house, he rises on the merit of his services to be next to Potiphar. When in jail, he rises to the place of management of all the prisoners. When he comes before Pharaoh, he rises to the place of manager of food collection and distribution (Genesis 37:46).

Finally, when times become difficult for the Egyptians because of the severity of the famine, he demonstrates good management by the plan of action he sets before the people. When times get better his stewardship and management offer the Egyptians a chance to work toward recovery (Genesis 47:13-27).

The combination of the fear of the Lord, wisdom, and good stewardship proved to be a great blessing to Joseph's family, to the Egyptians, and to Joseph himself.
—Rev. Henry N. Hostetter, Field Representative, Commission on Stewardship and Finance

Messiah College

Pool of Student Applicants Growing

Messiah College has experienced a healthy growth in student applications. Messiah now ranks third among evangelical Christian colleges and universities in attracting student applications. Seattle Pacific University ranks first, and Wheaton College second.

However, Messiah has been more selective than either Seattle Pacific or Wheaton, who admitted 83 and 76 percent respectively of their applicants. Messiah granted admission last fall to 74 percent of the 1,222 new student and transfer applicants.

Applications

Students who wish to attend Messiah College in the fall of 1984 are encouraged to apply within the next six to eight weeks.

Published or To Be Published

Dr. Dean Curry, Assistant Professor of Political Science, has begun research for one of two books of which he is the editor. The focus of the first book is on the proceedings of the conference this past summer on "The Church and Peacemaking in the Nuclear Age."

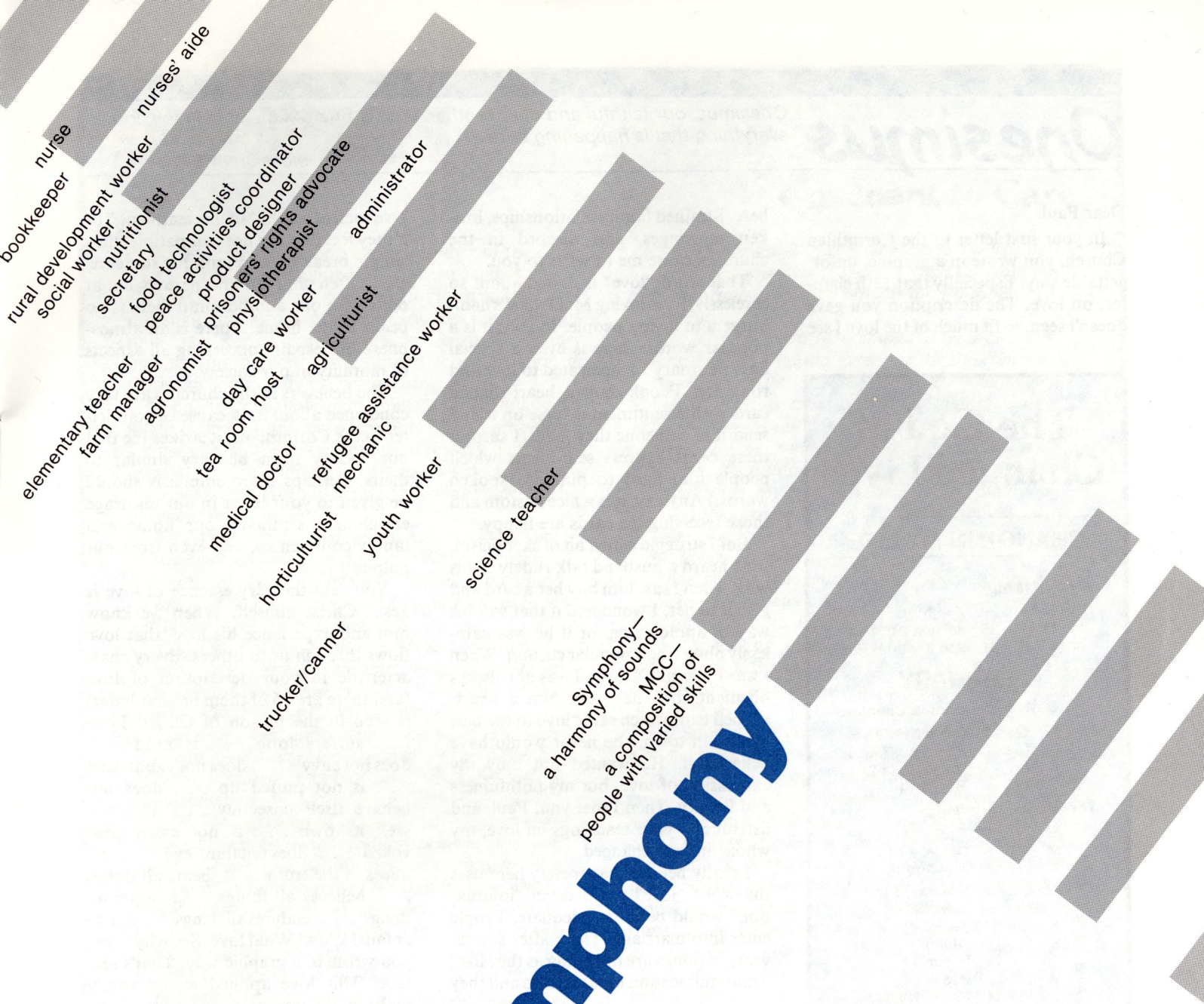
Dr. Randall Basinger, Associate Professor of Philosophy, is writing an introductory chapter and editing the book, *Divine Sovereignty and Human Freedom*, to be published by InterVarsity Press. The book will feature alternate viewpoints of four different writers along with their responses to each other.

"Sources of Missionary Stress," by Dr. Dorothy Gish, Assistant Dean at Messiah, was published in the fall 1983 issue of *Journal of Psychology and Theology*.

Curry and Basinger attend the Grantham Brethren in Christ Church, and Gish is a member of the Carlisle congregation.

Coach Shoemaker Honored

Dr. Layton Shoemaker, head soccer coach at Messiah, has been named Coach of the Year in the PA-NJ-DE Area by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America (NSCAA) in conjunction with the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. He attends the Grantham Church as does junior Dave Brandt, a forward on the soccer team who was named to the Second National Team by NSCAA.



bookkeeper
nurse
rural development worker
social worker
nurses' aide
secretary
nutritionist
food technologist
peace activities coordinator
product designer
prisoners' rights advocate
physiotherapist
administrator
elementary teacher
farm manager
agronomist
day care worker
tea room host
medical doctor
horticulturist
refugee assistance worker
mechanic
youth worker
science teacher
trucker/canner

Symphony—
a harmony of sounds
MCC—
a composition of
people with varied skills

The Symphony

Needed in 1984—311 workers

Mennonite Central Committee, 21 South 12th Street, Akron, PA 17501
MCC Canada, 201-1483 Pembina Hwy., Winnipeg, MB R3T 2C8



Dear Paul:

In your first letter to the Corinthian Church, you wrote in a graphic, unforgettable way. Especially that 13th chapter, on love. The description you gave doesn't seem to fit much of the love I see

here. Strained family relationships, broken marriages, and discord in the churches cause me to write to you.

That word "love" is tossed about so carelessly, from loving McDonald's hamburgers to loving people. In fact, it is a popular word. There is even a special day, February 14, dedicated to love and romance. People buy a heart-shaped card with a sentimental verse on it and send it to someone they love. (I suspect these cards express sentiments which people find hard to put into spoken words.) Anyway, it is a nice custom and those receiving the cards are happy.

But I struggle with a bit of skepticism, for I heard a husband talk rudely to his wife. Then I saw him buy her a card and give it to her. I wondered if that was his way of apologizing, or if he was carelessly observing a popular custom. When I was Philemon's slave, I was not always obedient. If I had sent him a heart-shaped card which said "love to the best master in town," he never would have believed it. He wanted not only my expression of love, but my faithfulness and loyalty. Then I met you, Paul, and listening to your teachings on love, my whole life was changed.

I really believe that society here uses the word "love" when often "infatuation" would be more adequate. People enter into marriage. Then, after several years, if things are not going as they like, if communication breaks down and they

give each other the "silent treatment," or if they feel they are not compatible, they simply break up and look for someone else! Often children and parents are at odds with one another until there is no peace in the home. There is an atmosphere of despair concerning all aspects of morality in our society.

The believers in the churches are very concerned about it. Because of your letter to the Corinthians, it strikes me that our society must be very similar to theirs. Perhaps more emphasis should be given to your letter in our marriage enrichment seminars, our home and family conferences, and even from our pulpits.

You said the very essence of love is Jesus Christ himself. When we know him and experience his love, that love flows through us to others. Every characteristic in your description of love (and there are 15 of them in your letter) is seen in the person of Christ. Love . . . suffers long . . . is kind . . . does not envy . . . does not vaunt itself . . . is not puffed up . . . does not behave itself unseemly . . . does not seek its own . . . is not easily provoked . . . does not think evil . . . rejoices in the truth . . . bears all things . . . believes all things . . . hopes all things . . . endures all things . . . never fails! Wow! What love. See why I said you wrote in a graphic way. That's real love. This love applied would surely make a difference in our homes and churches.

I can only believe that if we add this divine love (Christ's love) to our mutual love and affection, we will have the love which heals relationships and forgives, the love which is faithful and lasts, the love that would strengthen our marriages and homes. (Then we could send all those heart-shaped cards we want to!)

This kind of love is work. It demands a continuous 24-hour-a-day commitment. And it does work, Paul, for I'm happy to see that there are believers in the church here who have found and show this love. It is beautiful to see.

Onesimus

The God of Changed Lives

CHANGE IN MY LIFE

My God is holy

- S ☐ 29 Ex. 3:1-6
M ☐ 30 Joshua 24:14-24
T ☐ 31 Job 34:10-15

FEBRUARY

- | Day | Book & Chapter |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| W <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | Psalm 119:137-144 |
| T <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | Isaiah 6:1-7 |
| F <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | Isaiah 43:14-24 |
| S <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | Rev. 4:1-11 |

Therefore, I experience:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| Contrite heart/
repentance | S <input type="checkbox"/> 5 | Psalm 51 |
| | M <input type="checkbox"/> 6 | Daniel 9:1-19 |
| | T <input type="checkbox"/> 7 | Joel 2:12-19 |
| | W <input type="checkbox"/> 8 | Matthew 3:1-12 |
| | T <input type="checkbox"/> 9 | Luke 13:1-9 |
| | F <input type="checkbox"/> 10 | James 4:1-10 |
| | S <input type="checkbox"/> 11 | I John 1 |
| | S <input type="checkbox"/> 12 | Psalm 19 |
| | M <input type="checkbox"/> 13 | Psalm 24 |
| | T <input type="checkbox"/> 14 | Psalm 119:9-16 |
| Pure heart | W <input type="checkbox"/> 15 | Eph. 4:17-24 |
| | T <input type="checkbox"/> 16 | 2 Timothy 2:14-26 |
| | F <input type="checkbox"/> 17 | Heb. 9:11-22 |
| | S <input type="checkbox"/> 18 | I Peter 1:13-25 |
| | S <input type="checkbox"/> 19 | Deut. 10:12-22 |
| | M <input type="checkbox"/> 20 | Deut. 28:15-29 |
| | T <input type="checkbox"/> 21 | Job 28:12-28 |
| | W <input type="checkbox"/> 22 | Malachi 1:1-11 |
| | T <input type="checkbox"/> 23 | Heb. 12:18-29 |
| | F <input type="checkbox"/> 24 | II Peter 3 |
| Fear | S <input type="checkbox"/> 25 | Rev. 14:6-12 |
| | S <input type="checkbox"/> 26 | Ex. 20:1-17 |
| | M <input type="checkbox"/> 27 | Matthew 5:1-16 |
| | T <input type="checkbox"/> 28 | Matthew 25:31-46 |
| | W <input type="checkbox"/> 29 | Galatians 6:1-10 |

MARCH

- | Day | Book & Chapter |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| T <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | Colossians 3:18-25 |
| F <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | I Thess. 4:1-11 |
| S <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | I Timothy 5:1-8 |

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LEGAL NOTICE

"Messiah Village, 100 Mt. Allen Drive, Mechanicsburg, PA, a non-profit corporation of the Brethren in Christ Church, has agreed to comply with the provisions of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act of 1955, and all requirements imposed pursuant thereto, to the end that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, disability, or religious creed be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or otherwise be subject to discrimination in the provision of any care or service. The non-discriminatory policy of this facility applies to residents, physicians, and all employees. Under no circumstances will the application of this policy result in the segregation or re-segregation of buildings, wings, floors and rooms for reasons of race, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, disability, or religious creed.

We reserve the right to admit members of the sponsoring denomination as priority."

Covenant to Care

We were spending the evening together in the living room. Linda was studying for the pharmacology course she's taking, while I was preparing for the next session of our adult Sunday school class, this quarter discussing the ministry of caring. Sunday we would begin the chapter highlighting the need for a supportive, compassionate Christian community in such a caring ministry.

"Hon, listen to these eight points," I said, pulling her attention away from her lecture notes. "They are worded for use by small sharing groups, but I think they would offer a lot to a couple who wants to strengthen their marriage." And I read to her the following guidelines for covenant relationships:

1. The covenant of affirmation: *There is nothing you have done or will do that will make me stop loving you. I may not agree with your actions, but I will love you as a person and do all I can to hold you up in God's affirming love.*

2. The covenant of availability: *Anything I have—time, energy, insight, possessions—is at your disposal if you need it to the limit of my resources. I give these to you in a priority of covenant over other noncovenant demands. As a part of this availability, I pledge my time on a regular basis, whether in prayer or in an agreed-upon meeting time.*

3. The covenant of prayer: *I covenant to pray for you in some regular fashion, believing that our caring Father wishes his children to pray for one another and ask him for the blessings they need.*

4. The covenant of openness: *I promise to strive to become a more open person, disclosing my feelings, my struggles, my joys, and my hurts to you as well as I am able. The degree to which I do so implies that I cannot make it without you, that I trust you with my problems and my dreams, and that I need you. This is to affirm your worth to me as a person. In other words, I need you!*

5. The covenant of honesty: *I will try to mirror back to you what I am hearing you say and feel. If this means risking pain for either of us, I will trust our relationship enough to take that risk, realizing it is in "speaking the truth in love" that we grow up in every way into Christ who is the head (Ephesians 4:15). I will try to express this honesty in a sensitive and controlled manner and to meter it, according to what I perceive the circumstances to be.*

6. The covenant of sensitivity: *Even as I desire to be known and understood by you, I covenant to be sensitive to you and to your needs to the best of my ability. I will try to hear you, see you, and feel where you are and to draw you out of the pit of discouragement or withdrawal.*

7. The covenant of confidentiality: *I will promise to keep whatever is shared within the confines of the group in order to provide the atmosphere of openness.*

8. The covenant of accountability: *I consider that the gifts God has given me for the common good should be liberated for your benefit. If I should discover areas of my life that are under bondage, hung up, or truncated by my own misdoings or by the scars inflicted by others, I will seek Christ's liberating power through his Holy Spirit and through my covenant partners so that I might give to you more of myself. I am accountable to you to become what God has designed me to be in his loving creation.**

Linda agreed that without too much change, these guidelines for covenant groups could be used by a husband and wife. Later I discovered that near the end of the book, the author suggests much the same thing: "The family really is the basic covenant group. Anything that is said about covenant groups should be worked out in the family as well" (p. 100).

On Sunday morning, it was exciting to see the class respond to the covenant statements. As I expected, there were differences of opinion on the degree to which the eight statements were practical. For example, some asked how they could possibly be open and available to a dozen or so people as the covenants seemed to indicate. Nevertheless, by the end of class we had suggested that much of what was contained in the covenant statements would be appropriate for close friends and in congregational life as well as applying to marriages and covenant groups. (Discussion went so well, in fact, that I didn't have time to point out that the covenant guidelines reflect the kind of Christian relationships outlined in such passages as Matthew 18, James 5:13-20, and I John 4:7-21.)

The Apostle Paul, in his first letter to the church at Corinth, speaks of a love which "always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres" (13:7). I would urge readers to think of ways these eight statements of covenant commitment, appropriately adapted, could be of significant help in fostering in our homes and congregations the love Paul envisions.

In fact, if you are married, why not rewrite these eight points in your own words and offer them to your husband or wife, with the suggestion that together you work at reaffirming your love and commitment in daily, practical (and yes, even romantic) ways.

In the long run, that might mean even more than that lovely heartshaped Valentine card you are planning to buy at the Christian Light Bookstore next week.

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General Conference Information

A special, four-page insert was published in the January issue of the *Evangelical Visitor*. All persons attending General Conference should fill in and submit the requested information on lodging, meals, and transportation. Even those who plan to drive back and forth from their homes are asked to complete the form.

Because of the July 1 holiday in Canada and the July 4 holiday in the U.S., it is extremely urgent to make reservations early on planes, trains, and buses. The same urgency applies for those who plan to camp in area campsites or stay in motels.

You will need to fill out a separate form for each man, woman, and child. You can get extra forms from either your pastor or bishop. Or you can simply make photocopies of the form you have.

The Convention Director will again be assigning space for exhibits. Please make your request in terms of 8-foot modules. To cover rental costs, kindly include a check for \$10 for each 8-foot table needed. A limited number of tables will be near electrical outlets. If you need an outlet, please include

that information with your request and check (made out to General Conference).

Boards, committees, and agencies may submit requests to the Convention Director for meeting rooms to be used before and during the Conference. This can be done either before or during the Conference. Give date and time, and how many will be in the group. The Private Dining Room, seating 40, can be booked for mealtimes.

The Conference telephone numbers will be: Information Booth, (717) 697-7192; General Secretary, (717) 697-7168; and Auditorium Platform, (717) 697-7048. The college phone number, to be used only in emergencies when no one can be reached at the above numbers, is (717) 766-2515. Ask for Conference Services.

Pre-registration, with the pre-payment of all fees after receiving a response from the Convention Director when he receives your registration, is again the procedure. This will enable you to quickly complete your registration after you arrive.

Good activities are planned for all age groups. Children through age 11 will have supervised learning experiences similar to those at previous conferences. Excellent youth activities are also being planned. More details on these should be forthcoming soon.

An 11:00 p.m. curfew will be observed. All persons should be in their rooms by that hour unless involved in approved activities elsewhere. The curfew does not mean "lights out," but it does mean subdued conversation in the rooms.

For additional information, you can contact Paul Hostetler, Grantham, PA 17027 by letter or call (717) 766-2621. If no answer, call 766-8914 (Ken Mark residence) and leave a message.

Missions Convention Information

What in the world is God doing through the Brethren in Christ? What new directions is Brethren in Christ Missions taking and why? How is the Holy Spirit moving in places where Brethren in Christ Missions has been for decades? How can our small denomination meet the world's great needs?

The answers to these questions are exciting. Brethren in Christ Missions wants you to know these answers. That is why we are sponsoring a missions convention two days prior to the '84 General Conference at Messiah College. Workshops, media presentations and guest speakers, including Thomas Hermiz of World Gospel Mission, will answer these questions and more. The agenda of the convention is designed to give the layman a better understanding of the biblical basis for missions, a greater awareness of the needs of our world, and a closer look at what Brethren in Christ Missions is doing. Workshops will explain how youth and

adults can get involved in missions, how churches can plan dynamic missions conferences, and how churches can better minister in their communities.

To register for this convention, you must use the General Conference registration form. A copy of that form was in the January issue of the *Evangelical Visitor*. If attending both conventions, you must register for both at the **same time** on the **same General Conference form**. You will receive **one bill** for room, board and registration for both conventions. This bill must be **completely paid with one check** prior to the Missions Convention.

Registration will be on Wednesday, June 27, 7:00-9:00 p.m. and Thursday, 7:30-9:00 a.m. The convention will convene at 9:00 a.m. Thursday and close Friday at 4:30 p.m.

Transportation to and from airports will be provided by the General Conference staff. Children's programs for children through age 11 will be held during the convention.